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PUNCH or THE LONDON CHAPPIE—WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6 1950

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PUNCH

DECEMBER

6
1950

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No. 5743

PUNCH OFFICE
10 BOUVERIE STREET LONDON E.C.4

IMPERIAL LEATHER
HAND-FINISHED
Toilet Soaps

All who are sensitive to the finer shades of quality delight in Cussons hand finished Imperial Leather Toilet Soaps.

CUSSONS SONS & CO. LTD, 54 BROOK ST, GROSVENOR SQ, LONDON, W.1

TOO-WHIT, TOO-WHOO
WHAT ABOUT YOU!

You really do sleep when you have 'all-over-the-bed' warmth on wintry nights. Simply set the control and the Windak gives its cozy warmth as long as you want it. You sleep on it as there is no danger from its harmless voltage, and the new Windak heating element provides positive protection against over-heating when in bed.

THE NEW
ELECTRIC
'ALL-OVER-THE-BED'
**SAFETY
BLANKET**

We shall be pleased to forward the name of your nearest stockist.

WINDAK LIMITED • WOODSIDE • POYNTON • CHESHIRE

JN857

Symphony

An exquisite Tobler creation

Careful, brat!

... You are bearing the hopes, the longings, the gastronomic yearnings of twelve of your most discerning Elders. They are delivering, in short, One Dozen Bottles of Lembar. Treat them respectfully. Not every lemon barley water is made from pure lemon juice, judiciously mingled with the best, most mellow barley. Not, indeed, *Our Lembar* to a flavour for the gods. No, indeed. *Our Lembar* to Always remember that — always.

RAYNER'S
Lembar
Glucose Lembar from Chemists only.
Beverage Lembar from Grocers
and Wine Merchants.

MADE BY RAYNER & COMPANY LTD • LONDON • N.18



THE IDEAL
CHRISTMAS
PRESENT

*A New
Silk
Tie*

Cut from
the square
22"

T.M. Lewin & Sons Ltd.

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SHEFFIELD: SHOWROOMS, NORFOLK ST.
PARIS: BIARRITZ BUENOS AIRES RIO DE JANEIRO JOHANNESBURG BOMBAY

Christmas Party



What are they
talking about?

No, they're not talking about Father Christmas. They're talking about Burrough's Gin. People who really understand, and really *think* about their gin drinks, always prefer Burrough's, because it is *triple distilled*. This extra refinement makes it soft, smooth and perfectly clean to the palate.

Delicious taken plain, Burrough's Gin also "keeps its place" in even the most delicate cocktails. Prices: 32/4 per bottle; 16/11 per half bottle.



ENJOYED SINCE 1820
BURROUGHS *Gin*
BEEFEATER
IT IS TRIPLE DISTILLED!

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enchanting—they're practical!*



Vantona 'Court' Bedcovers are available in a choice of blue, rose, gold or green at prices from £5.2.6d. for 70"x100" to £10.15.0d. for 90"x108".

Write to the Vantona Household Advice Bureau which is at your service on all domestic matters
VANTONA TEXTILES LTD. 107 PORTLAND ST. MANCHESTER 1

Fashion leaders ordain the woven bedcover for its essential co-ordination of material, weaving craftsmanship, colour and design—refreshing attributes of the gracious d^ro^c of today. The designs of Vantona 'Court' bedcovers range from the classical to the contemporary; they combine artistic appeal with the practical virtues of durability, colour fastness and crease resistance. An additional bedcover will supply the housewife with curtains to match.

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BEDCOVERS



Horrockses

*the Greatest Name
in Cotton*



For generations housewives have been proud to say their sheets, pillowcases and towels were made by HORROCKSES. The name commands respect in every woman's mind and shall ever stand for quality the world over.

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CHICHESTER	TWICKENHAM	READING	RICHMOND	HOUNSLOW
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there's
always
time for

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Good coffee; with the full rich flavour, roaster-fresh fragrance! Yet so quick to make—put a spoonful of Nescafé in the cup, add near-boiling water. With Nescafé you're sure of perfect coffee every time. Nescafé retains all its strength and goodness, sealed in by the special Nestlé process until the touch of hot water releases it for your enjoyment.

ANOTHER OF NESTLÉ'S GOOD THINGS
S.I.C.



British Biscuits
at their Best

Macfarlane Lang



By appointment
Biscuit Manufacturers
to H.M. the King
Macfarlane, Lang & Co. Ltd.

ESTABLISHED 1817



Christmas cheer for 'kitchen captives'

If life seems to consist of endless hours in the kitchen, now's the time to get your release—and here's how: Give yourself a 'Prestige' Pressure Cooker this Christmas. It will cook in minutes meals that now take hours. It will cook them better because all the flavour and goodness is preserved. And it will save you money because the 'Prestige' uses so much less fuel. If you're doubtful—ask any woman who owns one; better still, ask your local store or ironmonger to show you the complete 'Prestige' range.



PRESTIGE 'COMMODORE'

A large family size model for the preparation of big meals and for bottling fruit and vegetables. Fitted with 3-way pressure control and possesses all usual 'Prestige' features for safety and simplicity. Price, complete with Recipe and Instruction Book and measure. 84/-

Other models from 72.6

Prestige pressure cookers

Save 75% time—75% fuel and ALL the flavour.

Fashions change but the well-dressed woman

remains unchanging in her choice of Aristoc stockings to match their elegance against good clothes. And if she loves the finer things of life she asks for Aristoc nylons . . . they put in a rare but regular appearance at most good shops.



THE ARISTOCRAT OF STOCKINGS

Swan Shoes



DL. 166
87/6

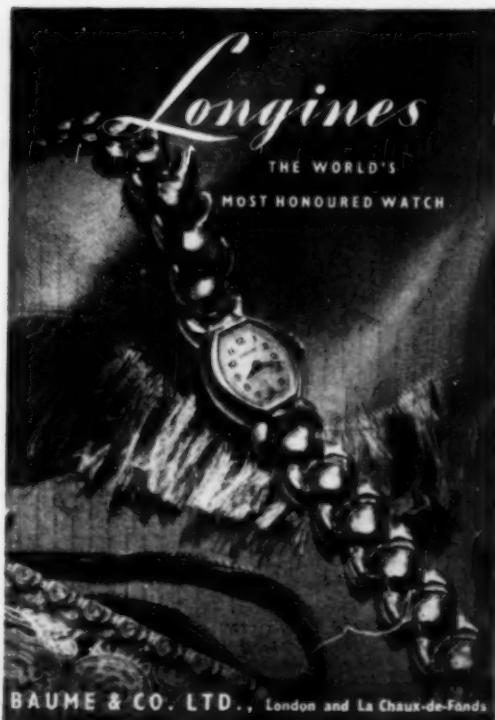
Two Bootee models with warm
fleecy lining. Styled by Swan for
winter wear, and fashioned by fine
craftsmen. Swan Shoes are sold
at the better shoe shops and stores
throughout the United Kingdom.

DL. 166
87/6



For man's shoes by CROCKETT & JONES LTD., NORTHAMPTON ask for *Health Brand*

Cva 166



BAUME & CO. LTD., London and La Chaux-de-Fonds

Gifts

Lavender water for Aunt Maud, socks for Uncle Henry. But surely you can choose better than that? Christmas shoppers find the Stores a veritable Aladdin's cave at this time of year. So here are some suggestions

for Weeping Princesses

Fine Irish linen or lawn handkerchiefs—for instance, 4 in a box for 25/- (but there are lots to choose from)

for Jovial Barons

Christmas Boxes in three sizes, £2. 10. 0. 5 gns. and 10 gns. Bottled chicken, Xmas pudding, glace fruits—everything. Or various gift cases of wines and spirits, from £2. 2. 5 to £5

for Bearded Villains

—a new shaving brush at say 56/-? A pair of military hair brushes for £3 completes the transformation

for the Dame

A 5-in-1 handbag (change the cover and the colour!) 46/-; or a cylindrical Tartan knitting bag costs 14/-

for Cinderella

Slippers—soft leather moccasins in red, brown, blue or green (with leather soles) 25/-

for Trap-door Demons

—a mellow cloud of smoke from our own famous Turkish and Virginian cigarettes, 50 Ayia Solouk Turkish, cost 14/-, and 100 Finest 'Blue' (Virginia) 26/-

for the Principal Boy

Gloves—for example, tan leather, seamless, wool lining (sizes 8-9) at 22/-

for Minor Characters

Noiseless roller skates! Rubber tyred, adjustable, 36/8; de luxe, 44/-—. Bicycles, tricycles and pedal cars. Or maybe a Coronet box camera with built-in Synchro-flash attachment at £2. 5. 4

Please write for your copy of our Christmas catalogue

Army & Navy Stores

EVERYTHING FOR EVERYONE

VICTORIA STREET SW1 • VICTORIA 1254

5 minutes from Victoria Station

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Jacqmar scarf
you are first
in fashion

Give smartly this
Christmas. Choose
one of the original
designs at

Jacqmar

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and leading fashion houses throughout the country

Feel the
difference

A Mason Pearson
really brushes!



Such a thorough brushing, such a delightful feeling of comfort, such an improvement in the appearance, as the Mason Pearson goes through your hair—sweeping out dust and dandruff, massaging the scalp, smoothing tangles, restoring your hair-style just as you like it! Mason Pearson, the original pneumatic rubber cushion hair brushes, were patented in 1885. They are available in attractive colours. Prices range from 21/- to 55/- including Purchase Tax. A cleaner is supplied with each brush. Ask at your chemist, hairdresser or store.

MASON PEARSON
London England



The
"THREE CASTLES" Cigarettes

20 for 3/10

Made by W. D. & H. O. WILLS, Branch of The Imperial Tobacco Co. (of Great Britain & Ireland), Ltd. 17720



Model 1806
 (London Frequency)
 Model 1806
 (Midlands Frequency)
 £197.4.11 Tax paid.

Model 1801 (also Midlands Frequency) is similar but incorporates also a 5-valve, 3-wavelength radio receiver. Price £192.0.11 Tax paid.

The Hallmark of Quality

But why should a watch be waterproof?

ORDINARY people don't get their watches wet—so why should the Rolex technicians have struggled to perfect the famous Rolex Oyster? Because a waterproof watch is more accurate. Its sealed case protects it from dirt and dust, as well as from water.

The Rolex Oyster uses the only really safe method of waterproofing—the self-sealing action of one metallic surface on another. This gives the delicate, accurate Rolex movement the protection it deserves . . . makes it one of the few superlative watches in the world.


ROLEX
*World's first
 waterproof wrist-watch*



THE ROLEX WATCH COMPANY LIMITED (H. Wilsdorf, Governing Director)
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TELEVISION is judged!

The

H·M·V· 1806

... fitted with the magnificent 15-inch aluminised Emiscope tube . . . what really outstanding pictures it gives even in full daylight . . . it has no equal in Television today. Even its luxurious craftsman-built cabinet is in a class of its own. If you can afford it there can be no other choice.

- Daylight viewing and brilliant reproduction on the incomparable 15-inch Emiscope aluminised tube.
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- Simple — easy-to-handle controls.
- Typical H.M.V. 'quality' cabinet — a worthy addition to any home.
- EASY H.P. TERMS ARE AVAILABLE WHEN DESIRED.

THE FINEST TELEVISION IN THE WORLD

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 FOR DETAILS
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TO DEPT. [P], THE GRAMOPHONE CO. LTD., HAYES, MIDDLESEX

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ADDRESS _____

For Christmas . . .



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friends
with
Martell
COGNAC

BRANDY FOR CHRISTMAS means MARTELL

THREE STAR

CORDON BLEU

Asprey

By Appointment to H.M. The King
Gentlemen & Jewellers

Original design, exquisite workmanship . . . the keynotes of these gifts from Asprey's. Gifts in gold have lasting value and will be lastingly appreciated.

PINS



9 ct. Gold Fox Mask, ruby eyes £7.10.0



9 ct. Gold Terrier £7.10.0



9 ct. Gold Tie Clip and Chain £6.10.0



9 ct. Gold Cuckoo Fob Watch £97.10.0



9 ct. Gold Ruby set Cigarette Holder £79.15.0



18 ct. Gold Toothpick £7.12.6

9 ct. Gold Cigar Piercer £4.17.6



9 ct. Gold Zodiac Keychain £8.12.6

Write for illustrated list of Christmas gifts . . .

ASPREY & CO. LTD. 165-169, NEW BOND ST., LONDON, W.1

CHARM BRACELET

The 9 ct. Gold Bracelet costs £9.0.0

The Gold Charms are: Gramophone £3.5.0, Golliwog £7.2.6 Scuttle £2.10.0, Scissors £1.17.6 Milk Jug £2.5.0 There are many others.

SCATTER PINS



Gold and Peridot Dragonfly £24.0.0

Gold and Tourmaline Pierrette or Pierrot £18.17.6

Gold and Moonstone Bottle £16.5.0

Gold and Moonstone Bottle £16.5.0

9 ct. Gold Lipstick Case with mirror £37.0.0



9 ct. Gold Note Clip £11.2.6

Christmas

Giving



From
21/-
(plus tax)

Every friend and relative on your list will be happy to receive a Swan pen or a Fyne-Poynit pencil. In a wide choice of colours and styles, including the new "Ladies' Presentation Set" shown above.

Swan Pens



MABIE, TODD & CO. LTD. Swan House, Whitley Avenue, Park Royal, London, N.W.10. 3 Exchange Street, Manchester, 2.

all over
the world
where
good taste
and
pleasure
meet

Dry Monopole
CHAMPAGNE

Safe representatives: Twiss & Brownings & Holloway Ltd., 5, Laurence Pountney Hill, E.C.4

Punch, December 6 1939



Fresh Fruit Season

all the Year Round... KIA-ORA

ORANGE • LEMON • GRAPE FRUIT • LIME • LEMON BARLEY



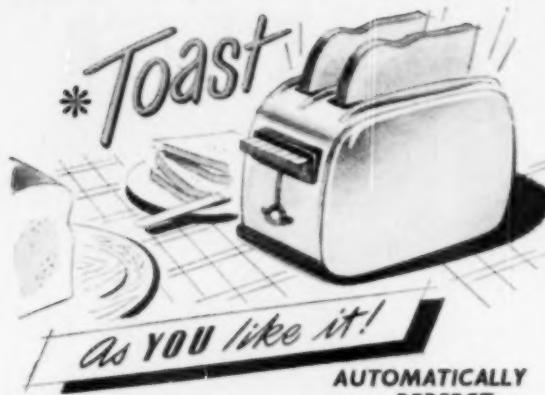


and washproof — No give-away fading or
running of the colours . . . these beautiful furnishing fabrics look as lovely

SANDERSON as the day you bought them —
year in and year out,
INDECOLOR FABRICS



— and have you
seen the new
ideas in
SANDERSON
WALLPAPERS ?



- ★ NO WATCHING
- ★ NO WAITING
- ★ NO SUPERVISION

FALKS Robot Toaster

AUTOMATICALLY YOURS

Obtainable from usual electrical suppliers.

Write for name of nearest retailer to the makers.

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AUTOMATICALLY . . . PERFECT

In goes the bread—out pops the toast, crisp, evenly coloured, served automatically at your table. The exclusive clock movement of this very special electric toaster ensures perfect toast . . . light, medium or dark whichever your choice . . . from first slice to last slice. No burnt toast, no frayed tempers but years of faithful service—reliable as a clock.

Price £5 18. 0.

Ask for a demonstration

A Glass of Sherry?



Buy Royal Decree

A Rich Royal Sherry—Amontillado or Nutty Brown—
at twenty shillings a bottle from your Wine Merchant

Jarvis, Halliday & Co. Ltd.

Jarvis

82 Pall Mall, London, S.W.1



Give her a Hoover

she knows it's the best

HOW thrilled, how excited she'll be—to have a magnificent new Hoover Cleaner with all the latest features, saving her hours of hard work every week. And think of the satisfaction you will have in knowing you are giving her the *best*. Remember, the Hoover does so much *more* than ordinary vacuum cleaners—it not only keeps carpets cleaner, but by removing the damaging trodden-in, gritty dirt makes them last longer.

There is a complete range of Hoover Cleaners—each a magnificent engineering job and beautifully finished to the last detail. Prices, with cleaning tools for curtains, upholstery, etc. :—from 12 gns. (plus purchase tax £3.3.0) to 22 gns. (plus tax £5.15.6). Hire Purchase available. See your Hoover Dealer and order now.



The
HOOVER
CLEANER
REGD. TRADE MARK



It BEATS... as it Sweeps... as it Cleans

HOOVER LIMITED • PERIVALE • GREENFORD • MIDDLESEX

AGA

Regd. Trade Mark

SAVES

IN THE DAYS BEFORE BANKS, country folk often buried their money under the hearthstone, and then lit over it the log fire which was never allowed to go out. Thrifty couples in these days keep up this old rural custom by putting their savings into an Aga cooker, which also stays in night and day. Here are some of the ways in which the Aga gives solid and appreciable savings :

On Cash:

So economical is the Aga in fuel consumption that savings in fuel bills eventually cover its initial cost. Look at it this way : the Aga Model CB has a *guaranteed* maximum fuel consumption of 3½ tons a year. With coke at £5 a ton this means your quarter's fuel bill is less than £4.7.6 — i.e., for less than a shilling a day you have constant hot water and a perfect cooking service. Compare this figure with your current fuel budget. The *difference will give you your monthly saving*. And the answer will set you thinking seriously.

On Work:

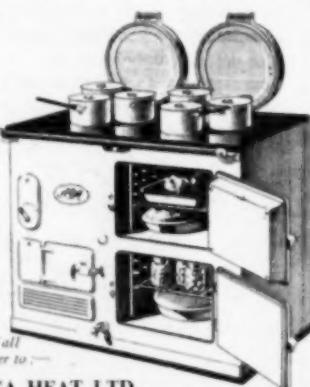
How much work the Aga saves ! No fire lighting, no black-leading, no constant stoking or refuelling, no greasy fumes, no soot or smoke. The Aga is as good as a servant in the kitchen.

On Capital:

Since 1929 tens of thousands of far-sighted couples have installed the Aga as an investment. They have got their money back long since and their fuel savings are now tax free income.

On Income:

The Aga CB is the only cooker and water heater which can be bought on Hire Purchase over a period of as long as five years (and is the only cooker and water heater on the market which is guaranteed for ten years). For as little as £2 a month (say 10/- a week or 1.6 a day) you can enjoy the most efficient cooker and an absolutely certain, trouble-free supply of hot water.



Send today for full details of all Aga models, address your letter to :

AGA HEAT LTD.,
20 North Audley Street, London, W.1
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In gracious homes, among those who demand the finest in radio and gramophone entertainment, you will find the R.G.D. Model 1046G 3 Radiogramophone. This superb instrument is fitted for long playing and standard records; your local R.G.D. retailer will be pleased to arrange a demonstration.

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Give the best you can obtain...

Give SPICER WRITING PAPERS



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Ma, French as French can be,
But I'm no less a thoroughbred,
Like VOTRIX Vermouth—see?

VOTRIX Vermouth

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The Huguenot settlers who arrived at the Cape around 1700 were already steeped in the secrets of viticulture and the art of making the most sought-after wines. They soon recognised in South Africa's perennial sunshine, abundance of suitable soils and reliable climate the perfect conditions usually associated with vintage

wines. Many years of tradition have established a South African Industry which to-day exports Wines and Liqueurs of almost every known variety—wines of unrivalled health- and pleasure-giving virtues... wines whose quality, flavour and charming bouquet are appreciated by connoisseurs throughout the world.

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Every shoe carries Sir Herbert's facsimile signature.

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FOR MEN AND WOMEN — MAKE LIFE'S WORK EASIER

NORVIC SHOE COMPANY LIMITED, NORTHAMPTON

What's quickest
and surest
in an emergency?



HENNESSY. of course.
the Brandy
that made Cognac famous

Hennessy Brandy is the heart of the grape.

It is distilled and matured in the heart

of the famous Cognac vineyards. The happy
blending of sunshine, soil, time and care

has produced a brandy which is enjoyed
in every country of the world. As a liqueur,

as a beverage, as a safe and quick stimulant,

Hennessy Brandy is unequalled.

Is there a Hennessy in the House?



No wonder they are England's most wanted 'things for men' — the intimate useful gifts he'll accept with open arms — and an open heart too! Choose any of the brightest Christmas packs from 4/9 to 45/-



Cheviot

8-3 GOLDEN SQUARE LONDON W.1

SOUTH HATCH
Epsom,
Surrey

COPE'S STABLE INFORMATION

No. 7 of a series describing famous racing establishments



ZENO — Imperial Cup
winner in 1927.



SILVERMERE — Gold
Vase, 1932.

SITUATED on the edge of Epsom Downs — almost under the shadow of the Grand Stand — South Hatch is the most famous of the Epsom training establishments.

Preserved over by Walter Nightingall, who succeeded his father there in 1897, the establishment has accommodation for some sixty horses.

The total of famous winners sent out from South Hatch both on the flat and over the stumps runs into hundreds. Perhaps the most popular were Zeno, Silverstead, Jugo, Rock Star, Arctic Star, Silvermere, Ambition, the war-time Derby winner — Straight Deal — and the mare Pambidan.

From the most famous stables at Epsom to the most famous name in Turf accountancy, Cope's Confidential Credit Service has, in 55 years, built up a tremendous following of really satisfied clients. They prefer Cope's for *confidence* and *personal* attention. The more they do with Cope's, the more they're *on* to integrity and fair dealing. They know — but why not find out for yourself? Send TO-DAY for your free copy of our fascinating new illustrated brochure.

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COPE'S

DAVID COPE LTD LUDGATE CIRCUS
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"The World's Best Known Turf Accountants"

CIGARS FOR CHRISTMAS—

but which cigars?..

For Christmas — if only for just this once — the *best* cigars! And so — as any man who knows today's cigars will tell you — you'll be wise to confine your choice to finest Jamaica.

And remember this: the occasional cigar smoker usually prefers a *mild* cigar. La Tropical — as full of character as any that Jamaica sends us — is notably, nevertheless, a *mild* cigar. *When you're buying cigars as a gift, you'll be wise to ask for La Tropical.*



In cedar boxes of 10, 25
and 50. In cartons of 5.

In all the usual sizes from
2/5d. upwards; Petits 1/6d.

LA TROPICAL

DE LUXE

Finest Jamaica Cigars

Safe Importers:
Lambert and Butler, Branch of The Imperial Tobacco Co. (of Great Britain and Ireland), Ltd.

Better
drink
for Christmas



Christmas Presents!



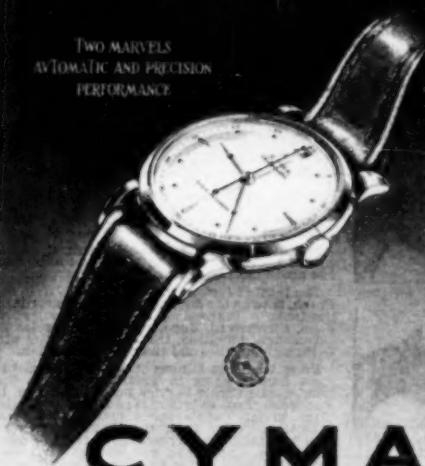
The flies are held by
Magnetic Force and
while easy to get at,
cannot blow or fall
out. For Medium
Salmon Flies and trout
wet and dry flies.

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... a name to angle with!
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AUTOMATIC AND PRECISION
PERFORMANCE



CYMA
Automatic
WITH SAFETY DEVICE PREVENTING OVERWINDING

BORN 1820—

still
going
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Johnnie Walker
Fine old Scotch Whisky



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ESCAPE TO THE PAST

A drink of priceless pearls

ONCE, long ago, the River Nile was host to an historic banquet. The food and drink were exotic beyond measure. The feats of strength and daring were magnificent beyond imagination. For had not Antony to impress the haughty Cleopatra?

She scorned his feeble efforts. She could do far better.

Antony laughed. Cleopatra briddled, saying that for supper she would consume food and drink costing sixty million sesterces — one-and-one-half million pounds. Confident, he challenged her boast with a great wager.

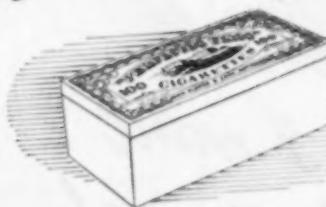
Later, when they had eaten, Cleopatra took a cruet of sharp vinegar. From her ear she plucked a pearl — the richest pearl the world had ever known — and dropped it in the vinegar. It dissolved. And, in consummation of this simple supper, she drank it off. Before she could reach for the second priceless pearl, she was judged the winner.

Antony, who had come for Egypt's navy and remained for Egypt's queen, sailed without either.

Today, little remains of that age of fabulous fare. We can still thrill to a view of Grand Canyon or the buoyant strains of Scheherazade. But what further have we?

A hint of luxury survives in Perfectos Cigarettes. Made by Player's according to the finest traditions of that world-famous House, blended by the world's finest craftsmen, they are packed in boxes of 50 and 100. In an imperfect world Perfectos Cigarettes are just about perfect.

“PERFECTOS FINOS”



CIGARETTES

192 Issued by The Imperial Tobacco Co. (of Great Britain and Ireland), Ltd.

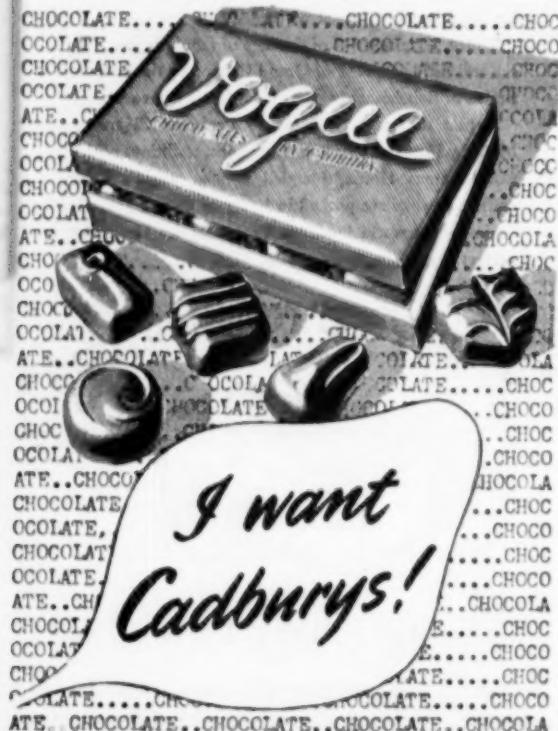
WHEN MEN WERE MEN AND WOMEN WERE WOMEN



THERE WERE GIANTS in those days, as the old saying goes. People in older times mostly had a vigour, a gusto, a pleasure in living that is often killed by the bustle and strain of modern life. 'Sanatogen' gives you back that gusto, that pleasure. 'Sanatogen' creates new reserves which will recapture for you that vitality and excitement of an heroic age. It supplies essential phosphorus and protein to build up both nerves and body, in form the system can easily assimilate.

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'Sanatogen' (Regd. Trade Mark) is obtainable at all chemists from 5/6d, inc tax.



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This is the Housemark of Whitbread, whose beers have been famous for over 200 years.

These beers are brewed from the finest barley and hops, bottled solely by Whitbread, and distributed from their 31 depots placed in key centres throughout the country. The combination of nation wide distribution and close supervision ensures that your Whitbread reaches you in perfect condition, wherever you may be. *Try some to-day.*

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PUNCH

OR

The London Charivari



CHARIVARIA

MR. MORRISON complains that Fleet Street is taking too long to set its affairs in order. The Government are clearly anxious that the newspapers should turn over a new leaf while there is still one left for them to turn over.



Members of a local Traffic Advisory Committee have complained that the holding of first-aid lectures for the staff in waiting-rooms at stations is causing inconvenience to passengers. They say that while waiting for trains they have had to cool their heels on the platform instead of in front of the waiting-room fire.



A Present for Christmas

A simple solution to the Christmas present problem is to give your friends an annual subscription to PUNCH.

This has the double advantage, denied to most gifts, of being wrapped up by somebody else and of repeating itself every week of the year.

Subscriptions can be arranged either through your local newsagent, or by posting the names and addresses of your friends direct to PUNCH, 10 Bouvier Street, London, E.C.4, together with remittance (30/- Home; 34/- or \$5.50 Canada; \$5.25 U.S.A.; 36/- elsewhere abroad). The subscription covers fifty-two weekly issues, the Summer Number and Almanack and (for 1951) a special "Festival of Punch" number.



"Kill two birds with one stone and cook enough sausages to have them hot one day and cold the next, with salad. The sausages can be slipped into the oven and baked along with some halved tomatoes." *West Herts and Watford Observer*

And the birds?

541

"It is fatally easy to lose one's bearings just now in Korea," cables a representative. But it is not true that the *Daily Worker* correspondent was recently found wandering in the British lines.

¶

Pessimist

"Good news for brides. You can now buy a full set of first-rate cutlery for one person only."

Daily paper

¶

Hollywood, we read, is still actively on the watch against suspected Communists. So far, however, none of its inhabitants has offered any objection to being screened.

¶

City folk, says a sailor, don't realize how dangerous fogs are for shipping going in and out of our ports. Cargoes of coal may actually be in danger of colliding head-on.



Deptford

MORE SCINDE AGAINST THAN SINNING

THE above title, otherwise contemptible, may serve to remind readers of a correspondence that has been raging recently, and relentlessly, in the *Daily Telegraph*. Starting from the sure foundation of a leader on the value of Latin, the correspondence took its natural, one might almost say hallowed, course, *via* the brevity and conciseness of that tongue, through "veni, vidi, vici" to the triumphant emergence of "Peccavi"—"I have Scinde." Sir Patrick Cadell, in the course of a brisk discussion on the origin of the famous dispatch, struck a shrewd blow for truth by attributing it to *Punch* of 1844.

If this paper has been a little slow in intervening in the debate the blame must rest squarely on the shoulders of Alderman Gibbs. Some might say that the Mean Mayor, the Ojibbeway Indians and the curious case of the Clock of St. Clement's have together wasted not less time than the Alderman and should bear their share of any odium that may be going. The objection is certainly not without weight. But Gibbs began it.

It must not be supposed, of course, that any doubt existed in the offices in Bouverie Street but that so good a joke as "Peccavi—I have Scinde" originated in the pages of *Punch*. If a difficulty arose it was simply that of actually laying a finger on the item in question; and that sort of difficulty can only be overcome by opening the volume for 1844 at page one and eagerly scanning it, issue by issue, page by page and column by column, for the word "peccavi" (which comes from the verb *peccare*—perhaps the only infinitive in Latin that resembles, at first sight, a small gregarious pig). This was done.

Alderman Gibbs makes a veiled appearance on the second page of the first issue. "The antiquarians of St. Stephen's, Walbrook," says an item headed "Novel Discovery," "were much puzzled the other day by the discovery of a very curious looking document, which an old parish clerk recognised as 'A Churchwarden's Accounts.' However, there was something written on it, which, for a long time, could not be made out; at last one old gentleman, having somewhat better eyes than the rest, discovered it to be the word 'audited!'"

This is the sort of item, weird, inexplicable, not immediately side-splitting but with just a hint of scandal about it, that is best calculated to delay a man looking for the word "peccavi." It makes it impossible

to pass over a contribution, eight pages later, headed "PUNCH'S PANTOMIME—*Harlequin Churchwarden, or The Wizard of Walbrook*," which opens with the entry of the Churchwarden into the nave of St. Stephen's reciting:

For twice ten weeks—and ten to that again,
They've asked for my accounts—and asked in vain.
For oh! how dare the varlets to expect
A sight intended but for eyes select!

Enter a GESIUS

The pantomime concludes with the performance of some tricks by the Churchwarden, as Pantalo, among which is "an extraordinary contrivance by which an immense pair of scales, with a balance labelled 'Balance on an immense Scale,' appear to pass naturally into Pantalo's pocket."

The impression begins to creep in that some sort of peculation, or misappropriation of public funds, is being hinted at, but four more pages must be turned before the shrewd anonymity in which the chief character has hitherto been cloaked is rudely torn aside by the appearance of ALDERMAN GIBBS in his own right (eight times, each time in large capitals) and followed by a total of no less than twenty-one exclamation marks.

To the searcher, whose eye has already been caught by five references to the Clock of St. Clement's and two to the Ojibbeway Indians, interruptions of this kind are an almost intolerable hindrance. Nor is there the slightest sign of any amelioration. On the contrary, in the course of the next seventeen pages the clock (which appears to have been out of order at this time) obtrudes itself three times, the inscrutable Ojibbeway Indians (of whom one soon tires) twice more and Gibbs himself on six several occasions. There is not a sign of Scinde.

Sometimes—a diabolical delaying tactic—two of the three pests are combined in a single paragraph:

"The public may not be aware that Alderman Gibbs' accounts were published on the same day that the clock of St. Clement's Church was set going. . . ."

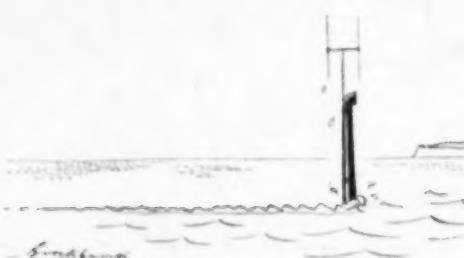
Perhaps not. Still, if Alderman Gibbs' accounts have been published and the clock of St. Clement's set going, there is an end of it. Victory for *Punch* on both counts. Only the Indians menace us now.

One underrates the tenacity of our forefathers. *Punch* thought little of the accuracy of the accounts and continued to chase the Alderman unmercifully, and as for the clock—what is this that meets the dimming eye?

"We have received several complaints on the subject of the Clock of St. Clement's, which has caused the greatest inconvenience since it has been put right, by the confusion it occasions to those who, having been accustomed to see it always wrong, are now more than ever misled by it."

The infernal thing went wrong again in February.

However, determination overcomes every obstacle in time. Constantly held up by Gibbs, fooled by an article beginning "Lord Ellenborough's despatches"





VISITATION

[Large blocks of ice have unaccountably fallen on this country in recent weeks.]



"Lor' bless you, no! That's last year's harvest."

on March 16, diverted by some stinging salutes at the expense of the Emperor of Russia, disheartened by the sudden reappearance, after a long absence, of the Ojibway Indians in April, and led astray by a new butt in the person of the Mean Mayor (who seems to have fallen short in the matter of giving dinners), we yet come at last to page 209, in the May 18 issue. And there it is:

Foreign Affairs.

It is a common idea that the most laconic military despatch ever issued was that sent by CÆSAR to the Horse-Guards at Rome, containing the three memorable words "Veni, vidi, vici," and, perhaps, until our own day, no like instance of brevity has been found. The despatch of SIR CHARLES NAPIER, after the capture of Seinde, to LORD ELLENBOROUGH, both for brevity and truth, is, however, far beyond it. The despatch consisted of one emphatic word—"Peccavi," "I have Seinde," (seined).

It was well over a year since the event, but jokes as subtle as that take time. *Punch* did not approve of the East India Company's habit of annexation, so that "Peccavi" has a sharp point, and the joke, though late, was topical in that Lord Ellenborough (known as "the tame elephant" and cartooned as such in the same issue) had just been recalled from his post as Governor-General.

We can now, and not before time, close the volume for 1854—only re-opening it to remark that the issue for November 9 is almost entirely devoted to the

inauguration of the new Lord Mayor. The fact that the Mean Mayor was going out was enough to make this something of an occasion for *Punch*, but the paper had a passing interest also in the new man—Gibbs.

The "follow-up" couplet, to which the attention of readers of the *Telegraph* has already been drawn, was published on March 22, 1856, and ran as follows:

TRUMPING THE ELEPHANT.

"Peccavi—I've Seinde," wrote LORD ELLEN so proud,
More briefly DALHOUSIE wrote—"Veni—I've Oude."

It seems to show a peculiar ignorance of the fact that its predecessor had appeared in *Punch* and, what is more, that the "despatch" had then been fathered on Napier. (Searchers in those days were possibly more easily diverted from their objective.) The restraints of verse, rather perhaps than any heightened confidence in the quickness of the reader, dissuaded the Editor in this instance from adding an explanatory (*I cooed*) at the end.

"Veni," in any case, lacked the sting of "peccavi," and it may have been some consciousness of this that led to the appearance in the next issue of an outspoken attack on the morality of the annexation. The title of this latter piece, "Oude Have Thought It," indicates that the pronunciation of this part of India was not less uncertain in the eighteen-fifties than it is to-day.

H. F. ELLIS

A MATTER OF NOMENCLATURE

IT isn't often, I suppose, that one sees anything really funny in the left-hand column of the front page of *The Times*. The coy announcement of a sister (Penelope) for Anthony and Elizabeth, and the brief records of engagements contracted and broken may bring a smile to the face of the cynic. But in the fifty-one-thousand-odd left-hand columns that have appeared up to the time of writing, genuine belly-laughs must have been few.

The last recorded instance happened to my wife at breakfast this morning. I looked at her inquiringly.

"It's Dorothy Bramridge," she said, still grinning.

"Dorothy Bramridge?"

"Bramridge."

"Bambridge."

"No. Bramridge."

"That's what I said," I replied, taking a piece of toast. "What about her?"

It seemed that Miss Bramridge didn't like her surname. Nobody ever pronounced or spelt it right the first time. The other members of her family apparently took a philosophical view of being known by a variety of aliases. They knew that when they met some official who had to write their name on a form they must spell it slowly letter by letter, and that even then it was an odd-on chance they would pick up an extra B or lose an R. They used rubber stamps embossed with the

twenty-seven commoner variants of Bramridge when they endorsed cheques. They accepted that it was utterly useless to any who they were to strangers on the telephone. At the theatre they would not themselves be amused by the stock situation of farce in which the irascible father refers to his daughter's young man indiscriminately as Philbrick, Pilditch, Filldyke, Maybrick and so forth, but they would recognize that for the Joneses and Robinsons in the audience the dialogue might possibly contain the elements of comedy.

Not so Dorothy. From her early schooldays she writhed at any distortion of her name. She was apt to be ill-tempered with shop assistants and people at the Food Office, and curt with new acquaintances who weren't concentrating when they were introduced. Moreover, she had to grapple with additional complications; the question "What name, miss?" drawing from her first a sigh, and then a despairing "Bwamwidge."

Mrs. Bramridge has always thought her unreasonable. "After all, Dorothy," she has been telling her for years, "I was forced to take the name when I married your father. I've got it for life. But what are you worrying about? You're bound to change it one day, and then you won't have any more of this trouble."

"That day," concluded my wife, "has now arrived." She passed me *The Times*, indicating with her finger where to read.

I wiped off the inevitable blob of marmalade and saw: "On November 15th, quietly, Dorothy, younger daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Bramridge of Exonsbury, to Colonel Wladislaw Skrzypczowski, formerly of the Polish Army."

• • •

ENTRE NOUS

IN modern prose some tend to praise

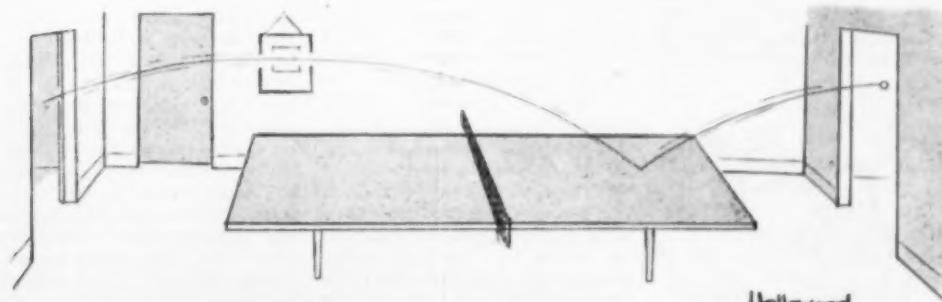
Extensive use of foreign phrase,
But when this habit spreads to verse
The trend declines *de mal en pis*.
Our English tongue has many
charms,
So why receive, à bras ouverts,
A poem which, though it may
rhyme,

Is couched in French *de temps en temps*?

Perhaps such verses are designed
By those who are *non compo-
mentis*,

And if we find that this is true
We ought to write their lines *de novo*,
Inserting, where each phrase
occurred,

The English equal, *verbatim*.
We'll gain, in saving Art from
cranks,
The reading public's *muchas gracias*.
However, it's a minor fault—
Let's take it *cum grano salis*.



NO DOVES

THE SEVERN WILDFOWL TRUST

WE had not been five minutes in the grounds of the Severn Wildfowl Trust before we encountered a *rara aiea*. We knew about *rara aiea*, we had even known for nearly two days that they came out of Juvenal; we also knew that a bird in the hand was worth two in the bush, that birds in their little nests agreed, and that you could in favourable circumstances kill two with one stone. We were confident of our ability to distinguish a sparrow from a peacock. If you had asked us to name ten different species of wildfowl we should have referred you to Mr. Peter Scott.

This *rara aiea* was a ne-ne, or Hawaiian goose, of which only twenty-four are known to exist—twenty-two at home in Hawaii and the other two in the Severn Wildfowl Trust's collection at Slimbridge in Gloucestershire. One might well think it strange to find a Hawaiian goose in Gloucestershire, but the goose seemed to see nothing odd about it. It hurried forward with glad cries and took some food from the outstretched hand of the Trust's Director. About the Director's feet a polychromatic assortment of Cape Teal, Bahama Pintails, Mandarins, Philippine Duck and other avian charmers clamoured for largesse. They were obviously showing off, we thought, for the Director is Mr. Peter Scott himself, and perhaps if they were *very* good he might put them into a picture.

"Come on, beautiful," Mr. Scott called winningly, carrying his bucket of tit-bits farther into the Rushy Pen; and they came as obediently as if they had been domestic hens



instead of whistling Tree-duck from Australia, Coscoroba Swans from South America, Barrow's Golden-eyes with rich blue-black heads, Carolina duck as gaily uniformed as Papal Guards, Mergansers with crests like untidy little boys, grey-and-black-freckled Emperor Geese, Red-breasted Geese from Siberia (worth a hundred pounds a pair—the Christmas turkey's nearest rival) . . .

"We've got every known variety of swan but one," said Mr. Scott, "and all but two varieties of geese. Altogether in the collection there are a hundred and twenty-two different varieties."

"And do you find," we asked, delighted to have spotted the opening, "that birds of, as it were, a feather tend to sort of flock together?"

Before we knew it we were discussing the origin of species.

When the light went we joined Mr. Scott for tea in his studio-laboratory-sitting-room, and he told us about his organization.

The Severn Wildfowl Trust is not a kind of zoo. The tame birds make a fine show, and the wild birds on the decoy and the Dumbles (the salttings where the geese feed) are immensely exciting to watch; but that, except in so far as it helps to bring in revenue from visitors, is

incidental. The Trust exists for the serious scientific study of wildfowl. What, for instance, is the motive in "preening"? How strong is a duck's sense of smell? Can birds see red light? Why should an adult Blue Snow-gander develop a "crush" on a kennel-type nesting-box when Blue Snow-geese are readily available? What causes tameness and wildness in birds?

Much work on migration is done by ringing. Duck are caught on the decoy pool by luring them up narrow "pipes" of water with a dog. Wild duck will always try to mob a dog; the dog leads them well into the pipe, which is covered by netting, and a man then shows at the pool end and drives the duck into the narrow funnel at the other end, where they are caught and ringed. The ring bears a number and a request to inform the Natural History Museum where the bird has been found. About ten per cent of ringed birds are recovered.

Ringing geese is done by means of jet-propelled nets. The nets, with rockets attached to the corners, are spread where the geese are known to feed; when the geese have obligingly pitched there the rockets are electrically fired and the net descends on them out of the blue. The tension while you wait for the geese to come within rocket-range, said Mr. Scott,





is terrific; the whole operation is even more wildly exciting than trapping duck in a decoy, and that is wildly exciting. The entranced geese are ringed and their posteriors dipped into bright-coloured dye to assist in future recognition; then they are released—and, like ducks (who commonly fly straight back to the decoy pool), appear to be none the worse for their experience.

We would willingly have listened to Mr. Scott on the subject all night, but we thought it hardly fair.

At half-past eight next morning, however, we returned, be-muffled, be-dusussed and be-gumbooted, and Mr. Scott led us out for the high spot of the expedition—our visit to the feeding geese on the Dumbles. It was nice weather for ducks, i.e., it had been raining heavily and there was much standing water which the ducks, in fact, disliked if anything more than we; still, plodding doggedly behind Mr. Scott, moving quietly, speaking low, keeping down when necessary—for the wild goose is easily upset—we came to the hide of the sea-wall. With infinite caution we peered forth—and there they were, about five hundred of them, rather far out, alas! but near enough to see beautifully through binoculars. They were, Mr. Scott said, chiefly white-fronted geese, though there were a few pink-feet and the usual "miscellaneous"—four cormorants, a heron, some curlew, and a couple of crows. There were no doves of course; they were all at Warsaw.

These geese are, in a way, responsible for the Trust being there at all. White-fronts breed in Siberia and

winter in England. Lesser white-fronts breed in Scandinavia, winter in Hungary, and in England are, in Mr. Scott's phrase, "as rare a bird as you are ever likely to see." Mr. Scott had a theory, however, that if the two migrating columns should ever meet, a few clueless specimens of each variety might take up with the wrong set and winter in the wrong country.

Now the geese have been feeding on the Dumbles for centuries, having been carefully tended by the Berkeley family, who own the land; but lesser white-fronts have not been regarded as "among those present." Then along came Mr. Scott in pursuit of his theory, and found a lesser white-front first go off. Since then they have been reported in this country a further eleven times, mostly in the same place.

With so interesting a phenomenon taking place within half a mile of a perfectly good duck decoy the Severn Wildfowl Trust was almost inevitable.

However, *revenons à nos oies.*

We asked Mr. Scott hopefully if there was a lesser white-front here to-day; but if there was, he was keeping out of sight. They fed quietly and unsuspectingly while we swept them with our field-glasses; and then came a sad but all too common interruption. An aeroplane buzzed across the Dumbles, and immediately the geese took flight, circling uneasily over the water long after the intrusive machine was out of sight.

But what is this? One of those flighting geese flaps faster than the rest; he is smaller in size; he is—is he?—well, it will need confirmation. But he *might* have been the thirteenth lesser white-fronted goose to be recorded in this country. We left the hide with a sense of triumph, as if we had enticed him to Gloucestershire ourselves.

B. A. YOUNG



AT THE PICTURES

*The Clouded Yellow
To Please a Lady*

AS far as the structure of the story is concerned, *The Clouded Yellow* (Director: RALPH THOMAS) looks to be a pretty insouciant job: the piece falls into two parts, the surprise-ending for one part being stuck quite arbitrarily on to the other so as to round off the film. But it comes over very well as an unpretentious thriller, lively and fresh in detail, well played and directed, amusing, and attractive to the eye. JEAN SIMMOS is again the persecuted innocent, and the weakest stretch of the picture is the first, which is devoted to establishing her in this situation in one of those artificially sinister country houses. Here the old clichés turn up—the insolent handyman irresistible to women, the piano-playing (for a horrible moment I feared another concerto), the spectacularly subtle attempts to make the innocent doubt her sanity, and so on. Later the piece becomes a pursuit story and moves north, and the authentic, well-photographed detail of life and scene in and around the docks of Newcastle and Liverpool and among the hills of the Lake District immeasurably brightens the chase. Another thing that brightens this chase is that it is supposed to be something of a duel between experts, for the innocent has the help of a sacked Secret Service man (TREVOR HOWARD) in a position to use his former professional contacts—not to mention such useful professional devices as feigning broken ribs and then knocking out the ambulance-man. Throughout, too, there is a valuable brightness about the fragmentary decorative incident or character: one remembers with pleasure such moments as the interview with the mild, deprecating, helpful appointments officer (RICHARD WATTS) who gets the hero his job of cataloguing butterflies and so gives the picture some vague excuse for being called after one of them. (Even so, I didn't notice any real connection.)



Age of Speed

In contrast to this, *To Please a Lady* (Director: CLARENCE BROWN) is a very elaborately planned piece of work, thoroughly calculated in every department from the first construction of the theme onwards. Construction of the theme, I repeat: this was no bright idea, but a careful fitting-together of proved box-office ingredients. Spectacular motor-racing, technical talk and "thrill circus" scenes for the men; for the women, the "career-woman" angle—brilliant, smart, beautiful, self-confident woman columnist with a sumptuously-furnished office, a palatial home, forty million readers, and strong men leaping to carry out her every order. Nobody short of the stern, savage and mature CLARK GABLE could be expected to handle so independent and power-drunk a beauty. He appears as a racing-driver as ruthless on the track as she is in print and on the air; as soon as she begins to persecute him in her column because of his ruthlessness the end is never in doubt (not that it ever could be in this sort of film, but you know what I mean). She falls

into his arms at the end because he has acted out of character for once by failing to be ruthless. All this is quite without significance or anything more than momentary value; but momentary value—mere entertainment, in fact—has its points.

* * * * *

Survey
(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

From the other London shows I would still pick *The Men* (29/11/50), *La Beauté du Diable* (15/11/50), *Occupe-Toi d'Amélie* (22/11/50), and that good thriller *Crisis*.

Best release, a very good one indeed, is *The Asphalt Jungle* (Director: JOHN HUSTON), which missed being reviewed at length during the printing dispute (drawings in "Cinema Sketchbook" 25/10/50): an excellent film about crime, well written, well acted, well photographed, well directed, memorable and worth seeing more than once. Another good one is a Cavalry-v.-Indians Western, *Two Flags West* (15/11/50).

RICHARD MALLITT

IS SCIENCE BANKRUPT?

A short précis of a Paper read by the author to the Biological Circle of Sopring-on-Sea

ONCE again I find myself at loggerheads with Modern Thought. I have just read a statement that the scale of atomic attack necessary to destroy the whole surface of the globe is much larger than people realize.

"Even if America and Russia," says the scientist who was interviewed, "were to devote their resources to this one end it would take about twenty thousand years."

This seems to me a counsel of despair. I cannot for a moment believe that the job would take so long. Does our scientist realize the effect of hearty good-will and co-operation in an undertaking of this sort? Of careful planning and a single overall control?

It is not of course a task to be undertaken light-heartedly. A great deal of care would have to be exercised to prevent overlapping, and it may well be that the assistance of the air forces of Great Britain and even more backward countries would have to be called to our aid.

But there is a brighter side to the picture. A great part of the surface of the globe (and this our scientist seems to have forgotten) is already in such a chaotic, tangled, ruinous, and altogether uninhabitable condition that it would be utterly unnecessary to destroy it at all. Bits of brick and stone, piles of rubbish and old metal lie about everywhere. It is impossible for me to get my own boiler-pipe mended. And what of the vast swamps inhabited only by the crocodile; the hippopotamus, the bull-frog, the quag-beetle and the water-leech?

What of the virgin forests of the Amazon, where the howl of the jaguar is only answered by the long bellow of the manatee? What of the thousand upon thousand acres of ice, where the penguin, the aurora borealis and the white bear reign supreme, and the harpoon of even the most intrepid of trappers is seldom or never heard? What of the gulches and canyons and huge crumbling masses of amygdaloid basalt and porphyritic gneiss, not one of which is worth the bother of bashing to pieces? What of the tracts of pathless sand without traces of human habitation, where the ruin of some ancient city has been accomplished already by a score of centuries even more neatly than it could be done by the most powerful explosives of to-day?

To tackle all this would be a waste of our labour and entirely outside the compass of the scheme under review.

Then, again, there is the sea. No responsible air force acting under a single unified command would attempt to demolish the sea, the waters of which cover about one hundred and thirty-million square miles, or five-sevenths of the surface of the globe, so far as I have been able to verify the calculations of earlier geodesists. To muck about with all this water would be merely to make laughing-stocks of ourselves, and might even have the effect of causing new islands to spring up in unexpected places; so that the whole work

would have to be undertaken again and again. Even if the sea boiled it would simply facilitate the labour of domestic cookery and bring us no nearer to our end.

Obviously we should concentrate on the built-up areas and the arable land, which are of a quite limited extent, and which alone would repay the cost of our enterprise. The one trouble that I foresee (though I cannot say how far it affected our scientist's calculations) would occur in the final stages of the operation. Suppose, for instance, that the bombing squadrons of Utica or of Omsk had carefully obliterated all the local targets allotted to them, they would still have to leave until the very end their own air-strips and their own stock-piles of atom bombs; and these would have to be annihilated with the last load. Orders would have to be given to every air fleet to avoid as far as possible munition dumps and landing grounds.

Otherwise the whole thing would be a fiasco. Nevertheless, to suppose that all the resources of our civilization would have to waste twenty thousand years on an affair of this kind seems to me to be a ridiculous over-estimate; even if we take out the time for Sundays, Bank Holidays, sickness, furlough and foggy weather. If this is the measure of our human progress in aviation it would be far simpler for every municipal borough to commit the undertaking to its own bulldozers and road drills, or for every citizen to take up his pickaxe and mattock and do the job for himself.

My own estimate is about ninety-eight years, for a forty-two-hour week without overtime. EVOR



"She's been wearing the same old things for as long as I can remember."

NEVER LET THE FANCY ROAM



WHEN I went up to the lumber-room the other day, to find something for a jumble-sale, I knew very well that I should be there for some time. It has happened before. Sure enough, the ten minutes that would have seen a better man on his way downstairs with a telescope, a solitaire board and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* were just sufficient to find me comfortably seated on a pile of Dictionaries of *National Biography*, reading *The Swiss Family Robinson*.

I had first settled down to consider whether a pair of fishing waders, fifteen years old, twice refooted and leaking like sieves, would be held to flout the Law of the Jumble. A really resourceful purchaser, I reflected, would have them as good as new in next to no time, by simply dipping them into a cauldron of boiling rubber. He would need some sand and a good deal of clay, I learned from *The Swiss Family Robinson*, which I found after a long search, wrapped up, for some incomprehensible reason, in an old table-tennis net. I was foolish to dip into it, of course. Most of us live rather sheltered lives nowadays, and for my part it has never come my way to rub the interior of a condor with pepper. My sun has long passed its meridian, and in the natural order of things I can now hardly expect that such an experience will be vouchsafed to me. The next best thing is to read about it, but I confess that I find it exceedingly difficult to leave the Robinson family sitting down to a couple of bear's paws, well soaked in brine, without ascertaining the outcome,

if I may so put it. However, in half an hour or so I was back to the business in hand. Unfortunately, it is pretty well impossible to brood over a pair of waders for a moment without recalling the last occasion on which they were worn, particularly when that occasion has been marked by the loss of the only salmon one has ever hooked.

As I sat, living once more that memorable encounter, it occurred to me that few of my fishing experiences would, if thrown on to paper, read so prettily as most of the specimens of angling literature that have so far come my way. ("McCrumple was ready with the gaff, and without hesitation he lifted out a fine cock fish, bright as new silver, of some thirty pounds weight.") On this particular occasion, for instance, it cannot be denied that there were two highlights at any rate that would look pretty odd in print. These might be referred to as "The Keeper's Question" and "The Fall Among the Clergymen."

In most of my angling literature keepers, gillies and so on limit themselves to an occasional "Cannily, cannily, your Grace," or perhaps a "Haud up, General, or he'll be ower the fa!" One at least has been known to exclaim, rather censoriously, "He wouldna' go!" I was fishing alone (I would dearly like to add "on this occasion," but truth will out—I always do) and it was quite by chance that the keeper arrived, some ten minutes after I had hooked my salmon. The following dialogue ensued:



Myself. "I'm into a salmon!"
Keeper. "Did you get that bag at Higginson's?"

One would have thought that the man might have had the sense to exclaim "Guid sakes, mon, haud up!" or something of the kind, but there it is.

A little later, when I should, I suppose, have been coolly applying side-strain, or sliding rings of twist tobacco down my line, I found myself forcing my way backwards through some bushes as I retreated up the bank. My plan was to coax the fish towards the side, when the keeper might, I thought, flounder into the water and pull it out by the tail: silver or cupro-nickel, it mattered nothing to me, and anything over seven pounds would have been splendid. So great was my concentration that before I knew where I was I found myself in the middle of a party of clergymen who had been watching the struggle. Apologizing awkwardly (I had trodden on several toes, and my landing-net, the handle of which I was for some reason holding between my teeth at the time, had knocked off someone's hat), and keeping a tight line on my fish as best I could, I burst my way out of the group, only to trip and roll some way down the bank. "He's off!" I cried.

Now of course all this, except perhaps the last exclamation, would make a pitiful show in print. Did literary anglers, I wondered, never have such experiences? Lord Grey of course, in his fine book *Fly Fishing*, touched on something of the kind—"The salmon made a sudden recovery, and dashed down between my legs"—"In stretching down to get my net under the fish I fell flat in the water"—but such frankness is rare.

By the time I had finished with *Fly Fishing*—and perhaps I should make it quite clear that I did not find it in the lumber-room—it was growing dark. I switched on the light and looked about me once more. A few condensers, resistances and inductances wired clumsy to a dry battery, together with a pair of headphones, turned my thoughts to the war and to one of the blunders committed by the Government at



the outset, hitherto unpublished—the attempt to make me into a wireless mechanic. At the time I was with the Government heart and soul. It seemed to me that although I had not been able to attain prominence in my chosen calling I might yet make my mark on the national life through the medium of wireless telegraphy. As in a dream I saw myself slapping Marconi on the back and correcting his wiring diagrams. "Where are your double-diode triodes, man?" I would chaff him. It was after I had completed the first part of my course that I bought these components. Like De Quincey, in his first experiment with opium, "what I took, I took under every disadvantage." Nevertheless, within an hour I was able to hear voices—faint, it is true, but unmistakable. Unfortunately, in this first great flash of brilliance it seemed that I had burned myself out. The next part of the course involved soldering.

Where Marconi was no doubt upheld by a mystical faith in his destiny, however deadly his solder ran, I became discouraged. As Keats wailed beneath the attacks of his critics—not of course about soldering, as far as I know—so it was with me. I lost heart.

The wireless parts were resting on some piano music, and I had hardly turned over a selection from "Funny Face" before I found myself closeted with Sir Malcolm Sargent and Yehudi Menuhin. Sir Malcolm was weeping openly and Menuhin was shaking me by the hand, his face working. I had played something or other—the first part of the "Moonlight" sonata, I should imagine. "I want you with me in Holst's 'Planets,'" Sir Malcolm was saying brokenly.

I suppose I was in the lumber-room for about three hours, with nothing to show for it but a broken coal-scuttle. I shall be firmer another time.

T. S. WATT

CAPTIVE AUDIENCE

WHEN an official with INFORMATION embroidered on his hat has told you that your train left Grantham fifty-four minutes late you have small choice either in the site of your detectable vigil or the company you find there. You dive for the only empty seat in the refreshment room, and you find too late that your table is shared by a balding, beady-eyed monologuist and a devoted stooge or straight man.

That, at any rate, was what happened to me. At first I didn't notice. I was thinking about the railway. Then I realized that a continuous low droning, which I had vaguely associated with tea-stewing machinery, was, in fact, the voice of the beady-eyed man.

"Weather!" he was saying. "Well, let's see. The Monday was wet; so was the Tuesday. Very, very wet, the Tuesday, rained all day. Wednesday, I said to the wife, I said, 'I think it's going to be a bit better.' You know how you do. 'It looks to me,' I said to her, 'as if it's going to clear.' I said."

"And did it?" said the other man.

It might have been said with a dozen different inflections, boredom, heavy sarcasm, mock-fascination and frank rudeness among them. I know how I should have said it. But the interpretation of the present speaker, a heavy man with a well-starched collar and thick spectacles, so surprised me that I blew bubbles in my tea, a thing I had always supposed impossible except in stage farce. He put the question, you see, as if he hardly knew how to wait for the answer. He leaned forward, eyes shining, his cup arrested half-way to his lips, his head turned a fraction sideways as if he suspected that one ear was capable of a shade finer tuning than the other. From that moment the heavy man, though he could not have said a hundred words during the whole fifty-four minutes, had my full attention. He was that enigma of enigmas, the man who listens to a bore as if he loves it.

"So I put the brake on and stopped the car," the beady-eyed

man was saying. "Put her in neutral, switched off, got out and closed the door and thought I'd have a look at this headlight, see?" The heavy man nodded with suppressed excitement several times. "Well, I gave it a bit of a knock first with my hand, like. Thought it might be a connection gone. Might be a broken wire. Sometimes when a light packs up like that, for no reason at all that you can see, it's just a loose connection. I remember coming down from Carlisle in September '47 — no, October it would be, because they'd just put the clocks back . . . no, I'm a liar, it was '48, two years ago. Well, I had a headlight pack up then. Or was it a sidelight? So I put on the brake and stopped the car, put her in neutral——"

"Switched off . . .!" said the heavy man, nodding and hitching his chair an inch or two closer. I imagine that if the President of the Dickens Fellowship had found himself listening to the missing chapters of *Edwin Drood* his attitude would have been much the same.

The voice droned on. I began to wonder whether the enthralled listener was perhaps a model of spiritual beauty and compassion who saw it as his rôle in this vale of tears to go about bringing sweetness and light into the lives of the trite and tedious, but just as I was formulating a plan to recommend him for canonization—what's more ripe for sainthood than this? —I happened to push my cup and saucer on to the corner of the beady man's evening paper, and saintliness tore out of the swing-door with a howl and flew off down platform seventeen. The heavy man's face darkened under a rich, plum-coloured flush as he deftly put back my crockery where it had come from, caught up the paper, examined it, smoothed it tenderly and slid it into a place of safety between the teapot and the hot-water jug. Then the plum shade ebbed as quickly as it had flowed, and the bland, devouring gaze once more shone its amber spotlight across the table. . . .

After forty minutes I was no

nearer a solution. The beady-eyed man had described with suffocating verisimilitude an experience with the adjustment-straps of a pair of corduroy trousers, an argument with a man named Henahaw about bilateral parking in Reigate, and the demerits of several brands of razor-blade. He had passed smoothly from these material topics to a long, passionless survey of the bath-water temperatures preferred by his wife's relations and given a graphic account of a collision between a led horse and a dry-cleaner's delivery tricycle called from a local paper in an hotel in Wimborne Minster. Throughout, the absorption of the heavy man, far from showing the least sign of flagging, had gathered in intensity. His vocabulary of encouraging interjections was an object lesson in English conversational idiom.

It was not until his strange idol suddenly caught sight of the refreshment room clock and sprang to his feet in the middle of an anecdote about string that he, for the first time, originated, or attempted to originate, a topic for discussion. Then, himself springing up, he suddenly yelled after the small, retreating figure: "Look, Mr. Dabbie—about that other matter——!"

But the beady-eyed man had gone, coat and dispatch-case flying. My eyes were not upon him, but upon the heavy man, who now sat down slowly in his chair, and even when it creaked under his weight seemed to subside still further, as it were, into himself. The light had gone out of him. He took a notebook from his pocket, studied what seemed to be a list of names and with sudden savagery struck one of them through with a dark blue pencil.

It was at that instant, I honestly think, that he saw me for the first time. He turned upon me a gaze of intense interest, and when he spoke his voice had a deep yet fluting tone.

"I wonder if I could interest you," he said, "in the subject of life assurance . . . ?"

J. B. BOOTHROYD



"Good heavens, Lavinia! It says here the East Wing was burned down last night!"



"It says: 'Be prepared.'"

MINE OWN TRUMPETER

BOOK-jackets get thrown away and many an author has found his earlier works forgotten because he has not taken the precaution of working the blurbs right into his latest book. The technique of doing this is seen at its ripest in detective stories, where the first chapter often not only gets the reader started on the story but provides him with material for his library back-list. It works something like this:

A MAN CALLED MITRIADOPoulos-PERRYFEATHER
by
AINTREE DANE
Chapter 1

Blythe Watson looked up at her beloved chief, Mawson Parkbill, with a furrow between her heavily pencilled brows. It was twenty-four hours since any new business had come into the office of the "En Tout Cas" Detective Agency and six months since a client had paid a bill. With hunched shoulders Parkbill was gazing out of the window, that window from which Magda had jumped to her doom, bringing the accumulated horrors of those heavy June days to a close that only Colonel Shipway, perhaps, had foreseen.¹ Dust lay thick upon the office furniture.

¹ See *Kensington Gore*, by Aintree Dane.

upon the bluebottle buzzing aimlessly on the lino-covered walls, upon the untidy heap of holsters and wigs in the corner. A car hooted in the street. Blythe remembered that much the same had happened while they were awaiting the telephone call from the mad chaplain that led to the horrifying finale of their search for the strangler of Aunt Polk-White.²

"It is better to travel hopefully than to arrive," Parkbill drawled with the wry smile that had so often torn at Blythe's heart-strings. He was in one of his literary moods, always a certain sign that he was worried. She would never forget the streams of Buchan quotations that had accompanied the solution of the grey slippers imbroglio. For a moment she fancied herself back in the Derbyshire mists, peering from Pennine to Pennine with a cold hand clutching her heart and only the homely wisdom of the gnarled gardener to stiffen her fibre.³ "You ought to get some rest, Chiebie," she urged.

Parkbill forced a whimsical smile. "You look after me better than you look after yourself," he riposted. "When did you eat last?" "While we were waiting for the Continental boat train, to see whether or no Giles Crew were aboard, the tension gripping our throats so that we had to stick to semi-solids," she replied.⁴ "Is this a client?" Heavy boots creaked up the stair, almost drowning the noise of asthmatic breathing. A red stain spread ominously beneath the door. The dragging footsteps continued on up to the next floor. Blythe burst out "Oh, I haven't been so disappointed since that stain on the cigarette-holder turned out to be only diethylparabenoldehyde, and had it not been for your noticing that the clock chimed backwards the raddled neck of the so-called Countess would have escaped the noose."⁵

Morosely Parkbill picked up the jade paper-knife. No need to mention what *that* reminded Blythe of.⁶ He slit open a few bills and let his head fall listlessly upon the hand poised to receive it. "Let's not keep thinking about clients and perhaps they'll come," he said. "A watched pot never boils."⁷ "Maybe," Blythe insisted, "at this very moment another Canon Cobday is hesitating on the stairs, prey to strange fears of he knows not what and entering upon an adventure the end of which may be no whit less strange than that macabre scene on Bexhill beach, when the crescent moon shone down on her who gambled with men's lives and lost."⁸ "Maybe," said Mawson Parkbill.

By a coincidence no less curious than most, it was at this very moment that a client did arrive. Announcing himself brusquely as Peter Walkwind, linen broker, of Threadneedle Street, he sat himself down with an air

² See *Bash That Blonde*, by Aintree Dane.

³ See *Here's Blood in Your Eye*, by Aintree Dane.

⁴ See *Scalpels for Two*, by Aintree Dane.

⁵ See *A Dagger in the Deb*, by Aintree Dane.

⁶ See *Dolichocephalic Death*, by Aintree Dane.

⁷ See *The Boys' Book of Thermodynamics*, by Aintree Dane.

⁸ See *Tubby's Doom*, by Aintree Dane.

of self-possession and gazed about him shrewdly. "This office is one of my disguises," said Parkbill hurriedly. Mr. Walkwind gave a curt nod and began "I was recommended to you by an old crony of mine whom you saved from being murdered by a Fiend in Human Shape called, if I recollect, Elapeth Budge."⁹ I have been receiving anonymous parcels. Every Tuesday for the last ten weeks a volume of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Seventh Edition, has arrived by post, addressed in block letters. What, Mr. Parkbill, can I expect when the set is complete? That is the question that haunts me as I lie awake at night."

"Is the sender's name inside?" asked Parkbill. "We must not neglect the obvious."¹⁰

"Come home with me, Mr. Parkbill," replied the client, "and I will let you see the volumes for yourself."

Skipping happily, Blythe led the way to the door. Their luck had turned at last.

R. G. G. PRICE

⁹ See *Who Crooked Cors* by Aintree Dane.

¹⁰ See *The Purloined Letter* : Edited, with Notes and Exercises, by Aintree Dane.

THE SHEPHERDS IN THE BEAUTIFUL PLAINS

"The shepherds in the beautiful plains o' Egypt and Babylon were the first persons wot paid much attention to the stars," observed Mr. Jorrocks, 'partly for want of amusement, not having no theatres, nor masquerades, nor circuses to go to, and partly to enable them to scrimmage about the country at nights.'—*Hillingdon Hall*.

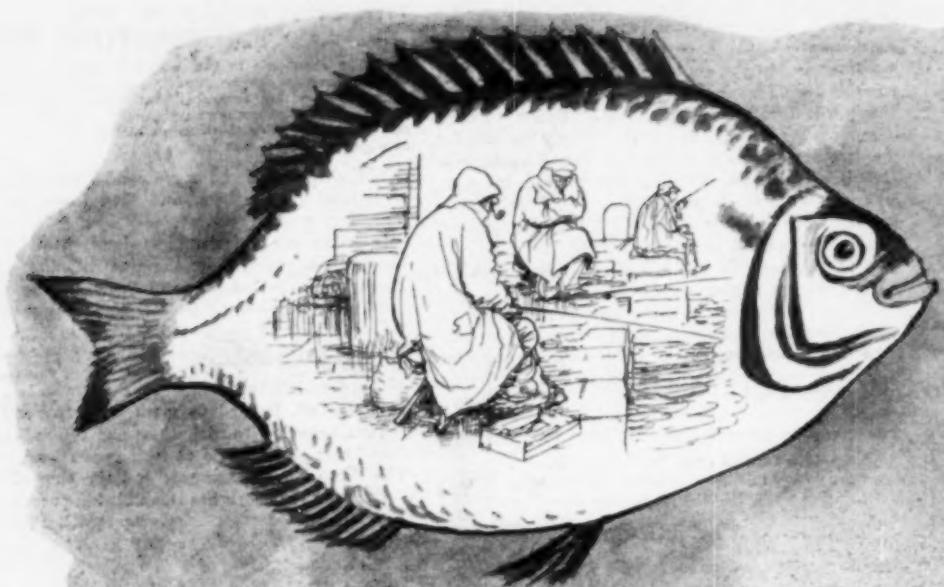
THE shepherds scrimmaged; and the laughing stars
Danced round them, and they knew not where
they went.

In wilderness and thankless desert pent,
Long exiled, yearning for the great bazaars,
The crowds, the hubbub, and the brimming jars
Of ruby wine—small wonder that they spent
Long nights of vigil, studious and intent,
Tracing the steps of Sirius and Mars,

Alphard and Betelgeuse, until their eyes,
Half dazzled, learned to mark and recognize
The changeless constellations and the vain
And fickle planets. So at last, grown wise,
The shepherds scrimmaged; and the charted skies
Danced round their heads, and led them home again.

R. P. LISTER







TIDINGS

IN the Dogger's swirls
Where the current whirls
The hapless swarms of fry,
I dream of the sunlit harbours
I knew in the months gone by,
For the sand eel and the squid peel
And the slivers of silver scales
No longer drift
As a guileless gift
That the tyro's hand impales.

On the Goodwin Shoal
Where the simple sole
Has never put hook to mouth,
I wait for the summer season
To come to the shores of the South.
For the rag worm and the lug worm
And the mussel dangling free
But thinly fall
From the harbour wall
And raggedly fringe the quay.

When the boats ply
And the flags fly
I shall swim to the rod-ring'd piers,
Where fishermen flail
From the crowded rail
(To tunes from "The Gondoliers"):
For the gay life is the short life
Nor sad is the inshore wave
When all may dine
From a baited line—
At the risk of a waterless grave.





FURNITURE ON THE EASY SIDE

MY visit to Attingham Park and my participation in a "Residential Course for Furniture Salesmen" were the pleasant by-products of an ugly rumour. It all began when a man with whom I am barely on nodding terms ran across the Strand to tell me that our retail salesmen and buyers "are partly responsible for whatever is poor or mediocre in modern industrial design." Those were his very words.

Well, you could have knocked me down with the proverbial unit of plumage.

"Hold on!" I said. "I wasn't born yesterday, you know."

"It's right," he said. "I got it from a most reliable source. It seems that in many industries the manufacturer is dead keen to supply the public with improved design, and the customer is anxious to buy it, but the ambitions of both parties are thwarted by the retailer. I thought you'd be shocked."

"Which industries?" I said.

"Lots. Furniture for a start."

"And the retailer is the niggard in the wood-pile, eh?"

"That's it. A bit of a shaker, isn't it?"

Needless to say I am not the kind of person that accepts a rumour at its face value; the very next morning found me in the Euston Road before the window of a largish furniture store. The goods on view were revolting. There was a bedroom suite ("Only £4 10s. 6d. per month") coated with gravy-browning and heavily encrusted with pimply beading; there was a "refectory-type" table with swollen ankles, bulbous knees and an "antique finish" (the stain had been applied unevenly to suggest donkey's years of ineffectual dusting and polishing); and a settee of shapeless pomposity festooned with tassels.

"Why not step inside, sir," said

a voice at my elbow, "and take a look at our special display of modern furniture? No obligation of course . . ."

He showed me a set of mock-Chippendale chairs with tortuous, torturous backs.

"You haven't any outsize antimacassars to go with them?" I said.

"They've gone right out, sir, antimacassars. Didn't you know?"

"Hm. Well, have you anything a little lighter in tone? I like to see what kind of wood a chair's made from. This is wood, I suppose?"

"We don't stock utility, if that's what you mean. But feel the weight, sir. Real value for money there. Look nice anywhere."

"Unfortunately," I said, "I don't buy my furniture by weight."

"Would a nice easy chair covered in period hard-wearing tapestry interest you? This one's a beauty. I don't mind telling you I've got two of them in my own home."

"May I try it?" I said, lowering myself accurately enough, as I thought, between the huge cylindrical arms . . . I levered myself up and tried again. This time I made it: as I

descended the friction on both flanks was equal.

"Not particularly wide, is it?" I said.

To his great credit he avoided the obvious riposte. "Well, you don't want a chair to take up too much room, sir, do you?" he said.

I stretched out my arms to encompass the full width of the squabby useless arms and looked meaningfully at him. He lowered his eyes.

He took my extended hand and pulled me to my feet. The easy chair detached itself and clattered to the parquet.

"Nothing else to show me?" I said.

He walked slowly towards the door and I followed.

"Strictly between ourselves," he said. "I haven't got two of them at home. They stink."

At that moment our brief business acquaintance suddenly ripened into lasting friendship, and within half an hour he had loaded me with useful information about such things as glue, veneers, block-board, dovetailing and tenoning machines, easy payments, dust-traps, grain, cellulose, bentwood and burrs.

I was not yet in a position, however, either to scotch or to substantiate the ugly rumour, so I rang up the Council of Industrial Design and was immediately invited to a gathering of furniture salesmen at



Attingham Park. I stuffed a tooth brush and a few assorted chisels and planes into my hold-all and hurried to Shrewsbury, to a handsome eighteenth-century mansion which is now the property of the National Trust and the headquarters of the Shropshire Adult College.

Some forty or fifty salesmen and buyers, drawn from shops all over the country, were assembled at this beauty-spot to hear lectures on "The History of Furniture Design," "Making Furniture by Hand," "The Selection and Use of Timber," "Making Furniture by Machine," and "Up-



holstered Furniture," to discuss every aspect of furniture design, and to consume some well-tempered college pudding.

It was all most instructive and enjoyable, but I shall confine my report on the proceedings to a selection of verbatim notes made during the discussions . . .

Q. "If the general level of internal heating in houses is improved should the moisture content of timber be reduced?"

A. "Yes, in America the moisture content of furniture is lower than in Britain—ten per cent or less against our twelve or fourteen per cent."

(Somebody suggested that a moisture content of twenty per cent would not be considered *de trop* in Manchester. Somebody else told how an English piano which had been exported to Canada and subjected to central over-heating had

exploded violently during a Chopin recital, scattering octaves over a wide area.)

Q. "Is it not possible to make three-piece suites with backs high enough to provide a head-rest? Or do restrictions prevent this?"

A. "There are no restrictions; but most designers seem incapable of producing a chair or settee with an adequate back without ruining the proportions of the furniture."

(This seemed to support the assertion of my friend in Euston Road that anti-macassars have gone out of fashion.)

Q. "Shops can't afford to take risks. Until the public is

must *so* do is to treat the past as a quarry from which we can extract designs ready-made and without cost. The reproduction or adaptation of period pieces is a confession of weakness, shiftlessness and lack of confidence in our own abilities."

Q. "Do you think that machine-made furniture will ultimately be as good as hand-made furniture?"

A. "Yes, but not if it is judged by the same standards. Good machine-made furniture lacks some of the qualities of hand-made furniture but has others that are equally desirable or necessary."

(At this point I rose nervously to my feet and put my one and only question.)

Q. "Er—I wonder if you could possibly let me know whether there is any truth in the ugly rumour that . . ."

A. "I'm sorry, but we have already exceeded our time-limit, and I'm sure you're all anxious to get back to your shops. Thank you."

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD





"Ah, here comes the gentleman who usually helps us."

CARNET DU BAL

I HAVE turned up an old dance programme, midget pencil and bit of blue fluff still intact. As I glance down the entries a name hits me in the eye, a name in a neat but immature hand—Veronica Hornbill. It comes four times.

I can picture the set-up fairly clearly. I am somewhere between eight and twelve. My sister, whose hair is getting ready to go up, and myself have been driven to a young people's dance by Coddington, with the back of whose neck we have been connected by speaking tube. Carnations and gypsophila in a slender silver vase and a tasseled blind at the back conspire to make leaving the car even more harrowing than leaving home. Nothing has

come of my suggestion that we should take a short cut through Black Devil Bog.

For the last furlong we have proceeded between fairy lights, and now we are ushered into a house that would just about stupefy the young people of to-day. In one direction our way is barred by great copes of chrysanthemums, in another by mountainous moussettes. In the conservatory are provocative little palm-girl aleoves lit by Chinese lanterns. We are glared at through lorgnettes and half blinded by tiaras. It is quite possible that one of us will get mislaid in the clock tower on the way back from the cloakroom.

An angel glittering with pins takes my regulation overcoat. I

know that she is the last person I shall talk to for the next four hours without a sense of strain. We are late (the entries begin at number six), so with luck we shall not be announced, which will stave off the moment when I am paired off with one of the poor things whom nobody, after carefully sifting the evidence, has asked to dance.

In the hall I am handed a programme—this very one. With it I am supposed to buzz from girl to girl, many of them no doubt in the very act of laughing into the eyes of large men, and beg them for dances. But I am not on that sort of terms with any of the people here. My only proper friends outside the family are Nannie and a kindly old retired General. Besides, no one will have anything to offer now except the second extra. As for the little dusky-trusty-vivid-true types with coral necklaces, they seem to come with their programmes already filled up, so presumably if one wants to dance with one of them one communicates by post.

When my sister shows up there is a onestep going on, so I drag her into the ballroom and push her round like a pram. I have given up trying to apply the principles learnt at Miss Congerhill's dancing class. Unless you keep completely clear of your partners you continually get implicated in what they have learnt at their dancing classes, and anyway it's all so different without Miss Congerhill's record of "Yes, we have no bananas."

While we are sitting out, Jumbo Cartairs, or one of that crowd, comes and whisk my sister away. Oh, roll on the day when I can say "Thankee" and have platinum studs and patent-leather hair like Jumbo Cartairs! This is one of the moments I have been dreading most. I cannot go on sitting out by myself. I haven't the gumption to settle down in the library with *Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour* like the Mullins boy or to go and hobnob with all the Coddingtons below stairs. The only alternatives are to hurry about craning my neck in search of an imaginary partner or to make a bolt for the grounds.

But it seems that I get no

option. People are lying in wait for me, wanting to know if I have met Veronica Hornbill. Yes, I have met Veronica. I am usually introduced to her at about this point. She doesn't enjoy dances any more than I do. At home she probably jogs along as happily with her bull-terrier (we never speak but I sense a very old bull-terrier) as I do with my cigarette-cards and my secret potato plot. But here we both have Persecution Mania. We are enemies of society and of each other. It would be difficult to think up a more frightful fate for us than dressing us up, joining us together and driving us into the arena to dance the Black Bottom; unless perhaps it would be forcing us to sit out together in a palm-girt alcove without any prospect of being able to get away from each other.

On this occasion we stay together right through supper until number ten when V. Hornbill gives place to P. Ottingtons. Number eleven I have with my sister, and for number twelve, a polka, I engage with a Mrs. Waddilove. It is quite a common thing for me to have the polkas with large, warm women who propose themselves. They wear tortoiseshell combs in their hair that drop out during the dance and quantities of black net that I am given sheaves of to hold.

Number thirteen—V. Hornbill. Number fourteen—H. Othouse, followed by Sir Roger de Coverley which evidently causes most of my shyness to evaporate as I take part in all the last four dances without once having recourse to my sister. The names of my partners are J. Gaynor, C. Bow, B. Balfour and, for the gallop, M. Pickford.

Oddly enough, though, what I remember most vividly about those dances (apart from the potting sheds and the hot-houses) are the loose boxes, the apple rooms and, in one macabre instance, the Elizabethan maze during a deluge. Another interesting thing is that if, as sometimes happens even to-day, I am handed a programme at a dance, I start, stagger back, sag at the jaw and wobble at the knees exactly as though I am reviving the Charleston. DANIEL PETTIWARD

CIVIL SERVANT

HE was one of those senior Civil Servants comic artists love to caricature.

In real life not too noticeably

correct

in the crease of his trousers
or the stiffness of his linen.

He wore glasses, naturally, above
a nose bony, it is true, but not
hooked.

In short, he obviously was just
what he looked.

He was a trifle uneasy with me,
as I with him, I expect.

But over the cornflakes, set
in that quiet sort of London hotel
where the likes of him and the likes

of me meet,
when we met

he seemed human enough.

We passed the time of day,
and the salt from right to left,
and the marmalade from left to
right.

Then silence.

For want of anything else to say
I asked: Have you seen the
fountains

in Trafalgar Square
floodlit by night?

He gave me an official stare.
His jaws—the caricaturists are
accurate,
they are lantern jaws—
continued to masticate,
and at last he gave me his
opinion,

Government-deliberate:

"Yes"—
he nodded his administrative
head—

"a great waste of money."
He shovelled in another ladle of
cornflakes.

"And very childish," he said.

God of Prigs, impute no sin
to my Rabelaisian grin.

But when, by floodlight, the Night
mare,

scattering cornflakes o'er his
hair,
de-bags him in Trafalgar Square—
may I be there: may I be there!

R. C. SCRIVEN



"Well, if you must know—it's to 'The Times' about inadequate rescue facilities on the high seas."

AT THE PLAY

*To Dorothy, a Son (SAVOY)**The Children's Hour*

(NEW BOLTONS)

If you were asked to write a farcical comedy around the birth of an unpunctual baby, whose mother must play a dominant part though unseen except for her hands, I think you would reply that such a proposition was simply not on. Yet Mr. ROGER MACDOUGALL has succeeded in fulfilling these conditions with tact and the liveliest humour. *To Dorothy, a Son* is sometimes perilously slight, but whenever one begins to fear for Mr. MACDOUGALL he calls the unexpected most expertly to his rescue, and his dialogue would carry wittily even a more fragile burden.

Much of the sparkle of this production is due to the ingenious business introduced in abundance by Mr. PETER ASHMORE, and to Miss ELIZABETH AGONBAR's clever set. Poor impatient *Mrs. Rigi*, sick of an athletic programme, has retired to bed upstairs, with her back to us, in a room walled off but visible when lit. She is petulant and exacting.



Accusation

Mrs. Amelia Tilford—MISS MARY MERRALL; *Mary Tilford*—MISS DOROTHY GORDON; *Karen Wright*—MISS JOAN MILLER; *Martha Dabie*—MISS JESSICA SPENCER

and her husband, an impoverished composer, spends more time on the stairs than at his piano. With the reappearance of his first wife, who settles in, comes the news that their divorce was invalid; and not until much later does he discover that in fact they were never married. Further, the first *Mrs. Rigi*'s uncle has left him a million dollars if he has a son within twelve months of the uncle's death. It thus becomes a needle match with the obstetric imponderables. The fatal hour passes, but *Mr. Rigi* desperately recalls the glad difference between American time and ours. Perhaps you can guess the end, though up his sleeve the author has yet another good ace.

The acting of this agreeable nonsense leaves nothing to be desired. Miss SHEILA SIM makes crystal clear the character of the invisible *Mrs. Rigi*, Miss YOLANDE DONLAN is consistently funny as the dumb but spirited intruder, and Mr. RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH, playing the husband with indomitable solemnity, sums up nobly for fathers. The scene in which he endeavours to explain Einstein to Miss DONLAN will make this a far happier Christmas.

Mr. PETER COTES' delicate production of Miss LILLIAN HELLMAN's *The Children's Hour* makes one regret again the intransigence of the Lord Chamberlain which still denies it a public stage. To bar a fine



(To Dorothy, a Son)

Expectation

Mrs. Rigi—MR. RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH
Myrtle—MISS YOLANDE DONLAN

play that treats a serious human problem seriously and at the same time to permit the erotic rubbish that often floods the West End is indefensible. Here is a piece by which any thinking adult must be moved. It deals with the innocent attachment of two women, one of whom, under the pressure of public suspicion, finds in herself what is suspected, and commits suicide. It grips with the power of melodrama, but cuts much deeper to discover the true springs of compassion. The weakness in the plot which allows the grandmother to ruin the two schoolmistresses on the word of a child is not helped by the intelligence which Miss MARY MERRALL cannot conceal; a more emotional actress might have glossed it better, but few could have brought to the part Miss MERRALL's exquisite sincerity. As the mistresses Miss JOAN MILLER and Miss JESSICA SPENCER give beautiful performances, Miss DOROTHY GORDON chills the blood with her abysmally St. Trinian's little girl, and the young doctor whose life is wrecked is taken well by Mr. DAVID MARKHAM.

Recommended

Brightly restored, the Old Vic has reopened bravely with a richly comic *Twelfth Night*. Two sound comedies with thought behind them are *His Excellency* (Piccadilly) and *The Holly and the Ivy* (Duchess), the first political and the second domestic. ERIC KEOWN

THE NEW EDUCATION

MY DEAR SON.—Mother will give you the money for the two new tyres for your bicycle, but do please find something interesting to tell me in your next letter. After all, with all the money spent to-day on education, there surely must be something you can write about. Tell me about your teachers. Your old dad never had the luck to go to one of these secondary schools. So come on. Something about the school, and don't always ask for money.

Your affectionate Dad

DEAR DAD.—Thanks for the tyres. They've come just in time, for the old ones are down to their last threads. You ask me to tell you something about the teachers at my new secondary school. This is some job, for, honestly, Dad, I've been here six months and can't even tell you what they look like. Nor can any of the chaps. You see, none of us have ever seen their faces. In fact we don't often hear their voices.

You are always telling me that things were much different in your days. Well, education must have been. For to-day we are taught by Visual Aids. In every classroom there is a sound-film projector, a film-strip projector, an epidiascope and an episcope.

The whole school is in darkness. I heard the caretaker telling one of the cooks that it is a waste of time opening the curtains, and so he leaves them always closed. But you soon get used to the darkness, and it is amazing how good you become at finding your way about. I haven't barked my shins for weeks.

Some of the films are jolly fine. Those I like best are those on Arithmetic, Algebra and Geometry, while French Grammar and Music are not at all bad. All the boys like the Maths films. When I think of the time we used to spend in working out long division and simultaneous equations it makes me boil. Now we just sit back and watch it on the screen.

The film strips are rather patchy. Some of them are deadly dull. The



"Now, if all three are there, he's somewhere around the office. If the bat's gone, he's at elevenses; if the bat and umbrella's gone, he's at lunch; if they're all gone, he's left for the day."

worst show I've struck so far was the French Revolution and insect life with the epidiascope.

Fortunately you don't have to sit too long through a dud show. You can always creep out, and go into another room where life is more exciting. It is better to crawl than walk across the floor when doing this, so that you don't throw a shadow on the screen.

The kids in class "B" are very good at this, and they work like a team. The other day Mr. Carson, who always seems to get hold of good films, was showing one on Convoys. Just after it started "B" class swarmed in like ants. They must have got fed up with their film. They hardly made a sound as they

crawled over the floor, although some of them must have given their heads some fearful clouts as they banged into each other in the darkness. Just before the end one of them coughed. It must have been the agreed signal, for they all started to wriggle back as silently as they came.

Two of the teachers have left the school during the last month and are working at cinemas. The caretaker told Dick that another is thinking of leaving as the pay is much more.

Anyhow, Dad, I don't go to the pictures now, so I ought to have some money in the bank by Christmas.

Your affectionate Son.



IMPRESSIONS OF PARLIAMENT

Monday, November 27th

Mr. ASURIS BEVAN is never far from the Parliamentary lime-light, whether he is present in the Chamber of the

House of Commons: Safe Crossings
Commons or not. To-day he was not present, but the fierce light that beats about a Ministry sought him out just the same.

It appeared that Mr. B. had made some statements at an "off-the-record" luncheon party to United States journalists, and that the journalists had thereupon printed reports that there was a "split" in the Cabinet—led by Mr. B.—on the question of rearmament, and paying for it. Considerable transatlantic excitement followed this announcement, and several Members tabled questions. And Mr. ATTLEE attended in person to deal with the matter.

When the time came he rose and, in the special staccato manner he reserves for such occasions (rather like the sound of ice being dropped in a tumbler), replied that he, "of course," supported any statement issued by his officials on his behalf. This referred not to Mr. B.'s statement but to the Prime Minister's Chief Press Officer's denial that Mr. B. was mixed up in a non-existent Cabinet split. When the questioner pressed the matter the Prime Minister snapped that he "quite agreed that these inaccurate reports were very unfortunate."

Round One to the Prime Minister.

But then another Opposition Member complained that these off-the-record "revelations of the personal views of Ministers" were highly dangerous to international relations.

Mr. ATTLEE replied that he was not going to lay down hard and fast rules and that Mr. BEVAN had not given a Press interview. The House listened for the normal allegation that the Minister had been misreported. But Mr. ATTLEE surprised his hearers by adding mildly

that there had been a misunderstanding and some mistake.

"And," said he, firmly, "*the Minister did not commit any indiscretion!*"

When the various conflicting emotions aroused by this comment had expressed themselves, fortissimo, Mr. ATTLEE added magnanimously that he did not accuse the Pressmen of dishonourable conduct either.

Having seen his Health Minister across what might have been a rather dangerous road Mr. ATTLEE listened attentively while Mr. ALFRED BARNES, his Transport

drivers of cars, making them cautious and courteous.

But the Minister was determinedly coy about the possibility of ordering that the *pedestrian* be dealt with by the law for disregarding a crossing or stepping out in front of vehicles. That, said Mr. BARNES firmly, was a legal matter.

Tuesday, November 28th

Both Houses had grave and intensely interesting debates to-day,

House of Lords: Euthanasia
House of Commons: No Sunday Fun Fair
on subjects into which religious convictions and conscience entered largely. Their Lordships were discussing the vexed question of euthanasia, more familiarly known as "mercy-killing." The Commons were debating the proposed opening on Sundays of the Festival of Britain fun fair.

The debates were, on the whole, worthy of the subjects they covered. Lord CHORLEY raised the discussion in the Lords, and was opposed by the Archbishop of York and the Lord Chancellor, from their different viewpoints. The many possible dangers of authorized killing were stressed, and, at the close of a sincere and moving debate, Lord CHORLEY dropped his motion favouring voluntary euthanasia.

The Commons had a more robust and hard-hitting way of dealing with Sunday opening. The proposal came before the House as part of the Bill to permit the Festival of Britain exhibition generally to open on Sundays. This Bill was given a Second Reading a week ago, on the clear understanding that that did not signify approval of the opening of the fun fair.

To-day the Whips were off on both sides—which meant that the gloves were off, too, and that conscience might make heroes of them all. And they certainly did not waste their unaccustomed freedom. Ministers sat in a long row on the Treasury Bench, cheering like mad



Impressions of Parliamentarians

Lord Woolton

Minister, gave details of a new plan for better but fewer pedestrian crossings. Fewer and better appears, by the way, to be the new slogan of the Government, for a little earlier the Food Ministry's representative had announced that the only complaints that had been received about "Webb Sausages" were that they were not numerous enough. And fewer but better sausages was the order of the day.

Mr. BARNES's version of the slogan was that a good many of the pedestrian crossings were to go, as being little used and—as the Minister of Labour would say—"redundant." Those that remained, however, would either have a policeman to see that they were given due honour or else a gay striped design of black and white, which (so the Minister said) had a strong psychological effect on the



"Sir, the foreign assistant has just vanished in a cloud of brimstone."

—on opposite sides. Tory fought Tory, Socialist fought Socialist. The Liberals alone (so far as could be noted) seemed united on the issue.

Mr. GEORGE THOMAS, from Cardiff, started the battle by moving, from the Government benches, that the Sunday opening be not permitted. His case—the strict Sabatarian one—was made with sincerity and Celtic fervour, for this was not, he said, a trifling issue. And he foresaw the spread of fun fairs all over the (at present) peaceful land, once the Government itself backed this one in London.

Mr. JAMES HUDSON, sitting just behind Mr. THOMAS, complained strongly that the proposal his Party colleague had put forward tried to make the nation righteous by compulsion—a "revolting" thought, he said. So it went on, the cut and thrust of debate, until Mr. HERBERT MORRISON, whose hard work has largely been responsible for the Festival arrangements, rose and said mildly that there would be no amplified music in the fun fair. In fact, he gave the impression that the fun fair would be as silent as was

the Government during the whole of the debate. But everybody agreed that the Government was right to leave the issue to a *really* free vote, without so much as a hint of the way the Government (or even the majority of the Government) wanted it to go.

Half-way through the division Mr. WYATT wanted to raise a point of order and, having perforce to be "seated and covered" (as laid down in the rules), he borrowed the only available hat, the jaunty black velvet beret of Miss JENNIE LEE. He said some Members had voted, in error, in the wrong lobby—whereat the respective official Whips smiled grimly—but Major JAMES MILNER, in the Chair, said he could do nothing about it, the choice of lobby being one for the individual Member's conscience and intelligence.

The vote over, Mr. THOMAS and his fellow-tellers lined up before the Table, bowed with as much freedom from unison as the division itself had shown, and announced the result: For Sunday opening, 134; against, 389.

Mr. THOMAS was so delighted with the result that he skipped nimbly off to collect congratulations—and had to be hauled boisterously back into line until Major MILNER had announced the figures from the Chair. Mr. MORRISON accepted the position with a resigned, if disappointed, shrug.

Wednesday, November 29th

Mr. ERNEST BEVIN, looking pale but more vigorous than of late, opened a debate House of Commons
The World Surveyed on foreign policy with a tour of the world, pausing at the numerous trouble-spots.

The fact that he had a trouble-spot of his own on the Government back-benches, where the better part of a hundred M.P.s had signed motions implying criticism of his policy, added piquancy to the debate. But over all hung the grim shadow of events in Korea, and the shadows that might yet stem from that shadow. So it was a serious and sober debate, to which Mr. EDEN made a measured and powerful contribution.



"To what do you attribute your good luck in winning this enormous prize, Mrs. Badger?"

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON IS FACED WITH THE ORDEAL OF CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

XXIV

WITH trembling hand I op'd the door
And mingled with the mingling throng
That sway'd and surg'd and swept along
My steps upon the echoing floor.

No rest had I on moving stair
I upward slop'd from stage to stage,
Or prison'd in the lattic'd cage
Shot up, like flame, from here to there.

One thought, and then another, toss'd
The questing and inconstant mind,
And urg'd the will that could not find
Its goal, or finding, fear'd the cost.

An hour I studied, here and here,
The presents, but selected none,

Save only two, for Arthur one,
Another one for Guinevere;

No more. A voice made echo "What?
No more! But other friends remain:
What have you bought for proud Elaine
For Galahad and Lancelot?"

And in my heart I question'd Where,
And weigh'd the sum of When and Why;
From lift and floor came no reply,
No answer from the moving stair.

So thro' the dark I went alone,
And heard a calmer accent fall,
That inly counsell'd "Send them all
A cheque, and let them buy their own."

G. H. VALLINS

BOOKING OFFICE

Cactus Blooms

IN *Rude Assignment* Mr. Wyndham Lewis reviews, modifies and defends the opinions he has expressed during a fighting life of nearly forty years. He confesses that his controversial writing is sometimes "slipshod" and, unfortunately, what might have been a great apologia turns out to be a hurried and ramshackle communiqué on the war between Mr. Lewis and the enemies by whom he feels himself encompassed. After all, however much resentment his critical attacks may have caused at the time, he has usually won his case in the long run. If he has not made much direct impression on the philistines, he has had a very considerable influence on those sufficiently intelligent to appreciate his skill in diagnosing their weaknesses; he has permeated the leaven and thus, indirectly, the lump. He is particularly concerned to repel the allegation that he is a Fascist; the charge was never very convincing, and as it was made far back in the days of the "Popular Front" it should surely not worry him now.

The core of *Rude Assignment* is political. Mr. Lewis no longer feels that Western civilization is capable of defence and advocates World Government, while still believing that all government is bad. It is a pity that he has not devoted either more or less attention to politics. His metaphysical mind is at home in criticism of the political theorists; but he does not seem to have studied the theories in action. He is too impatient of history and sociology. When he is criticizing Philosophies of Time or the Myth of the Noble Savage in its modern form he knows the object of his attack at first hand, whereas his knowledge of political and economic institutions is intermittent and casual. He has an unpolitical mind. As his honesty will not allow him to take the fashionable escape route into Anarchism he gives the impression of floundering about, and his hard, keen intellect does not flounder gracefully.

The disappointingly short autobiographical section of the book will entertain the gossip, and of course for the historian of contemporary ideas the whole volume is important; but one cannot help wishing that Mr. Lewis would stop frittering away his time in conflict with opponents who are too insignificant to call out his full powers as a satirist. His novels and his pictures, of which a small selection is reproduced here, form his permanent, positive contribution, while his polemics are bound to be ephemeral, unless they are, as they sometimes used to be, themselves works of Art.

Mr. Geoffrey Grigson's autobiography, *The Crest on the Silver*, is consciously and successfully a work of Art. You do not have to be particularly interested in the influence of Mr. Grigson on his times to enjoy it, though it is an important source for the history of criticism in the last two decades. Like Mr. Lewis, whom he admires, Mr. Grigson is a polemical writer. He hits hard and true at what he feels to be false and dangerous, but he also establishes his positive loyalties. While his

autobiography is not, thank goodness, mellow, it only occasionally gives its readers the fun of seeing an expert swordsman rip up his contemporaries. Indeed, Mr. Grigson now expresses some compunction, and more distaste, for the asperities of his "New Verse" days.

This account of the growth of a poet's mind and of the development of curiosity that widened out from Family to Place, Nature and Art is written with passion and a ruthless indifference to self-inflicted pain. Mr. Grigson has scholarship, disciplined sensibility and a thorny genius. The precision with which he invokes Cornish and other landscapes comes from the vitalizing of detailed botanical and topographical knowledge by feeling which has become diverted from persons through early experiences of emotional inadequacy in the Family. *The Crest on the Silver* ranges widely, and includes some amusing descriptions of Oxford and Fleet Street and a variety of artistic and amorous pursuits. However, what is important is the picture of things loved, the Cornish Rectory, the Family and the Place, where knowledge of the beloved has been drawn from ceaseless exploration by a trained intelligence that never relaxes and whose reward is a strict, almost bitter, joy.

R. G. G. PRICE

A Notable Rip

Pembroke Papers (1780-94) is a second instalment of Lord Herbert's selection from his family letters at Wilton. They give a full picture of life in a great country house, in this case shadowed by the behaviour of the tenth Earl, who reminds one, in his extravagance, perverseness and dialectic agility, of



Sir George Sitwell. An authority on horses and shooting, he was a constant problem to his long-suffering son, whom he bombarded from the Continent—his amorous playground—with fatuous advice on the conduct of a heavily burdened estate. He was witty and generous, however, and, though the later legal wrangles grow tedious, many of his outrageous letters are extremely entertaining. The Court and London society are intimately reflected, since his son was Vice-Chamberlain to the King, his gentle and charming wife a lady-in-waiting to the Queen; and we are given inside glimpses of the purchase of commissions, the manipulation of local politics, and of other indefensible but picturesque institutions of the time.

E. O. D. K.

Unhappy Warrior

Sir Duff Cooper's first excursion into fiction—a very short one, with no elaborate itinerary—is, unfashionably enough, a civilized story about civilized people. It is the life story of a man born to be a soldier, whose spiritual home is his regiment, and for whom the battlefield has still the glamour of romance; but whom time and chance keep passive in both the wars and whose love, like his military ardour, is to fail of its final satisfaction. Yet *Operation Heartbreak* is not a tale told altogether in the negative; the detachment of its humour is tempered by a far from dispassionate humanity; and the twist in its tail is not only a surprise but a fulfilment. It is, in essence, a *comte philosophique*, and though Willie Maryngton, with his inarticulate idealism, could only have been an Englishman, his creator has at command the lucidity, the economy and the nicely controlled irony of the Gallic masters in that kind.

F. B.



A Box from Mudie's

"It seemed to me in those days that the patronage of Mudie's was a sort of recognition from Heaven," wrote Mrs. Oliphant, whose desperate struggle to keep a pack of helpless male relatives renders her the most pathetic of Mr. Alan Walbank's *Queens of the Circulating Library*. There are nine of these ladies, flourishing between 1850 and 1900; and a critical introduction, brief biographies, extracts from the novels and illustrations from "yellow-book" covers portray most entertainingly a society which, like many other societies, conditioned, and was conditioned by, its story-tellers. Charlotte Yonge heads the procession, Marie Corelli brings up the rear; Miss Braddon, Mrs. Henry Wood, Rhoda Broughton, "The Duchess," "Ouida" and Mrs. Humphry Ward swell the ranks. There is not, you observe, much progress. The only quoted books worth re-reading, except as amusing curiosities, are "The Heir of Redclyffe" and "Helbeck of Bannisdale"; and "Helbeck," the "Brideshead Revisited" of its age, deserves more respectful and accurate treatment than it gets here. H. P. E.

"This Column"

The lure of the Thames almost overcomes Sir Alan Herbert's intention to devote a whole volume to his career in Parliament, and provocative and informative though his tales of the House may be, it is his incidental picture of real war in the lower reaches of the river, as seen from little *Water Gipsey*, together with a brilliant brief sketch of "Monty," his close personal friend, in action in Normandy that will stick in one's memory after reading *Independent Member*. In spite of his most sober triumph with the Marriage Bill and innumerable fighting sallies on behalf of common sense and Parliamentary liberty, "A. P. H." has often been accused of political levity, and it is indeed true that even serious things do strike him first and foremost funny side up—surely not a very reprehensible characteristic. He just cannot see why he should not speak the truth because it happens to be comical, and by his own admission he must have quarrelled with a record number of fellow Members. They, one and all, enjoyed the experience. C. C. P.

Books Reviewed Above

- Rude Assignment*, Wyndham Lewis. (Hutchinson, 21/-)
- The Crest on the Silver*, Geoffrey Grigson. (Cresset Press, 15/-)
- Pembroke Papers: 1780-94*, Lord Herbert. (Cape, 25/-)
- Operation Heartbreak*, Duff Cooper. (Hart-Davis, 8/-)
- Queens of the Circulating Library*, F. Alan Walbank. (Evans Bros., 12 6d)
- Independent Member*, Sir Alan Herbert. (Methuen, 21/-)

Other Recommended Books

The Diaries of Lady Charlotte Gurol. Edited by her grandson, the Earl of Bessborough (Murray, 18/-). Vigorous journal of a gifted woman married to an ironmaster in Wales, giving amusing glimpses of early Victorian society.

Lifemanship, Stephen Potter. (Hart-Davis, 6/-) The author of "Groomsmanship" applies its principles to "the smaller world of Life." Extracts have recently been appearing in *Punch*.



CHRISTMAS BOOKS

for older children

THIS year there is a quantity of sound and readable books for older children, and a few that are worth keeping on the bookshelves for many years. One of these (it is for girls only) is Noel Streatfeild's entertaining compendium on the art of growing up wisely and pleasantly. *The Years of Grace* (Evans, 15/-) is divided into sections on Home, Sport, Leisure, Careers, etc. All the articles are written by experts (among them Elizabeth Arden, Marguerite Steen and James Laver) and the editor contributes amusing introductions to each section. In future there should be no excuse for blue stockings to be wrinkled or lipstick (if it *must* be used) to be overdone. *A Girl's Hobby Book* (Falcon Press, 6/-), by Louise Fellowes, should make holidays fly, for there are articles on painting, collecting, music, fortune-telling, cooking, gardening and puppet-making. Another "girls only" book is *A Dream of Sadler's Wells* (Evans, 8/6), by Lorna Hill. It is an unpretentious and blessedly possible story, because its heroine does not leap to fame from the wrong side of the footlights but works for the chance of a training and shows (the book is written in the first person) a pretty sense of humour. Books for boys make books for family reading too, and one of the best is the latest in the famous "Bunkie" series, by M. Pardoe—*Bunkie Went for Six* (Routledge, 7/6). The engaging hero keeps his pleasant manners and shows consideration for his parents throughout the risky adventures that begin in Guernsey and end in England. It is improbable of course, but what does that matter? So is *The Provost's Jewel* (Peter Davies, 8/6) by Elisabeth Kyle, but how good it is. Walter Macfadyen, a newly-orphaned son of a shepherd tries his hand at sleuthing and succeeds, *of course!* But though the story is a great deal better and more exciting than many grown-up thrillers the charm of it lies in Walter's endearing character. He is as tough, dour, humorous and gay a boy as ever lived between pages. In *Thunder Reef* (Hodder and Stoughton, 8/6) Adrian Seligman (that wonderful writer of his own sailing experiences) has turned to fiction and created a family of English children who, with a French boy and girl, have adventures on and off the Breton coast. This is stern lifelike stuff, and again we have a first-rate hero in a semi-crippled lad. In comparison *We Never Thought of That* (Heinemann, 8/6) is milk-and-water fare, but the author, P. M. Lovell, has written a pleasant and not too impossible story about a party of young people who prolong their holiday in the South of France by hiring a *café*. Probably the best animal story of the year is *Greatheart* (Hutchinson, 8/6), by Joseph E. Chipperfield, most beautifully illustrated by C. Gifford Ambler. It is about an Alsatian puppy that runs wild after it

has smelled man. Later it returns to the call of that smell, is disciplined by love, trained at a guide dog school and accepts service "day in and day out" to a blind man who needs it "as man had seldom needed a dog before." Some may consider it sentimental, others exaggerated, but the rest will love it. In *This Way to Greenacres* (Longmans, 8/6) Maribel Edwin keeps to the same sort of pattern. Here a leveret is tamed, runs wild and returns to its human home again. The author writes so well of country matters that it is tantalizing not to know if the end of the book has a basis of fact. Those who are worthy of it will love the latest of Opal Wheeler's enchanting books on musicians—*Frederic Chopin* (Faber, 9/6). She writes of the time when Warsaw was like a city in a fairy story, mentions "lovely mother Chopin," tells how people listened when "the sad-eyed musician from Poland told in melody of his beloved Poland," and describes how he died to music. Another book for specialists is *Postage Stamps* (Puffin Books, 1/6), by L. N. and M. Williams, which has a most attractive cover of stamps and a great deal of information. There is no information but a great deal of fun in Ian Serraillier's poetical nonsense verses, *The Monstrous Horse* (Oxford, 6/-), and this will be a treat for parents as well.

B. E. BOWER



"Here. It's a 'must'"

ROUTE

IT has often been remarked that murderers look almost more like ordinary people than ordinary people, and the same applies to time-table fiends, whether *Bradshaw* or *A.B.C.* I thought when I entered the lounge of the hotel that the half-dozen people draped over the chairs and settees were just the usual flotsam and jetsam that one finds in such places.

Apparently I was wrong. From the way they responded when I innocently asked if anybody knew the best route from Mulcaster to North Woburn I think they must all have been delegates to a conference of the Bradshaw Society or possibly the Inner Circle of the A.B.C. Club.

"Mulcaster to North Wabsham!" said a man with a red beard. "Nothing could be simpler. If you catch the 6.32 a.m. express from Mulcaster you get to Skipton Junction at 8.47. Nip over the bridge to platform four, and you will have time for a cup of tea and a yesterday's pie before getting the 8.58 slow to Langbury. You

will arrive at Lansbury at 9.53, in comfortable time to catch the 9.58 to North Wabsham, arriving at 12.42."

A growing murmur of dissent from other denizens of the lounge had almost drowned the latter part of his instructions, and as soon as he had finished a tall thin man with a contemptuous expression gave a short laugh.

"Your route would be all right, Snelling," he said, "if the 6.32 wasn't SE and the 8.58 SO. Actually the gentleman does not need to leave his bed as early as you suggest. By taking the 7.15 slow to Wigwick he can catch the 7.33 express from Wigwick to Babblesham, arriving just as the bar opens at 10.30, and giving him time for a quick one and a sausage roll before catching the 10.49. It is true that the mustard at Babblesham always has a dark brown crust on it, but if you dig deep enough you will find it quite good. The 10.49 will get you to North Wabasham at 12.37."

A little man with a fanatical gleam in his eyes had been deep in *Bradshaw*, but now broke in with a shout of triumph.

"You've both forgotten," he said, "the Lumsford Loop!"

An expression of deep chagrin crossed the faces of Snelling and the tall thin man.

"You needn't leave Muleaster until 8.13," said the little man. "You arrive at Lamsford at 8.52, and catch the 8.54 . . ."

"No time for a sandwich,"
objected Snelling.

"And too early for even a very quick one," said the tall thin man.

"It doesn't matter," said the little man crushingly, "because the 8.54 is R. Ample time for breakfast before you change at Diggle End at 10.7. You then cross to the Low Level station and catch the 10.23 direct to North Wabsham, arriving at 12.1."

Snelling and the thin man slunk from the room, baffled and beaten. I felt sorry to disappoint the little man in the hour of his triumph, but unless I spoke I was afraid somebody else would start, and I already had a headache.

"Perhaps I should have made it clear," I said gently, "that I am travelling by car."

D. H. BARBER



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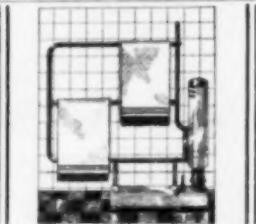
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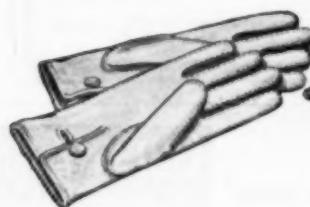
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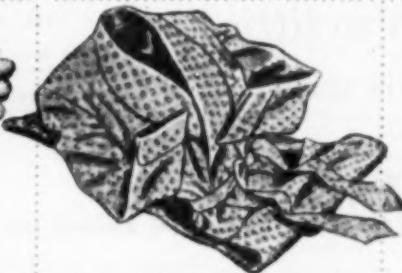
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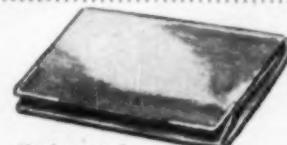
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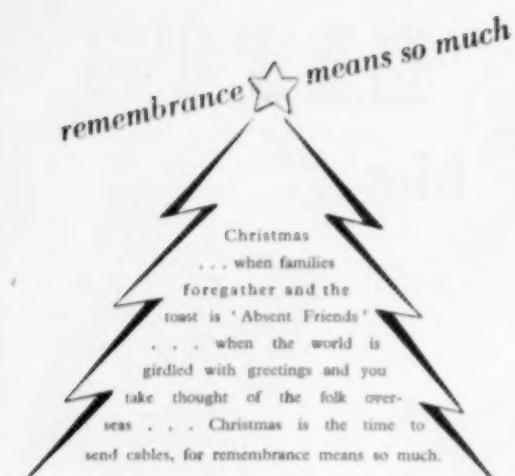


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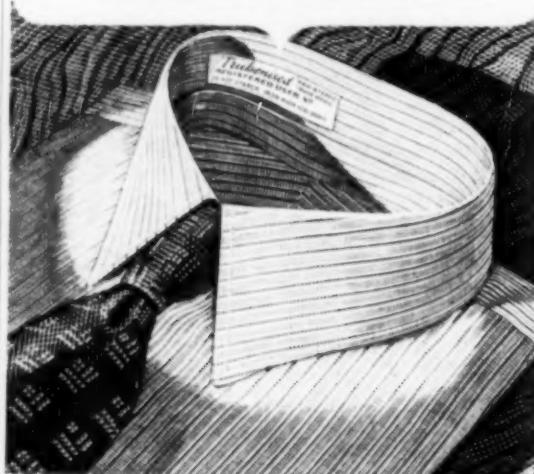
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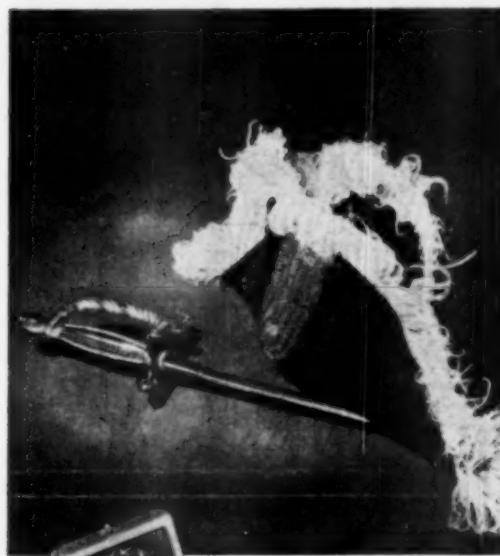
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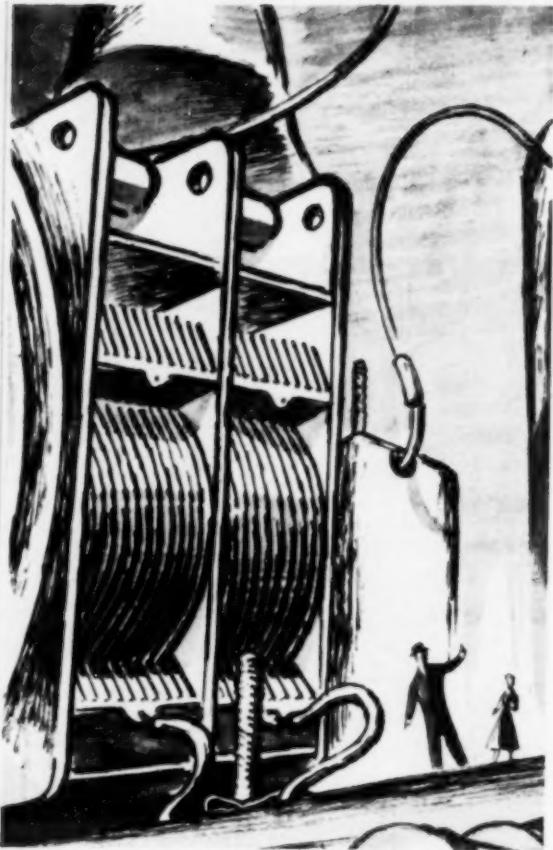


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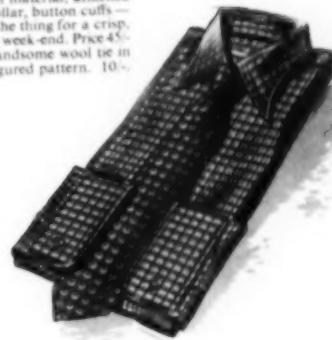
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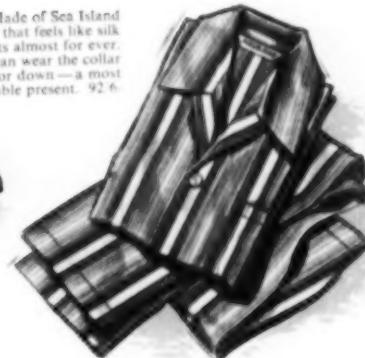


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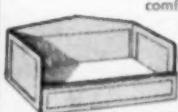
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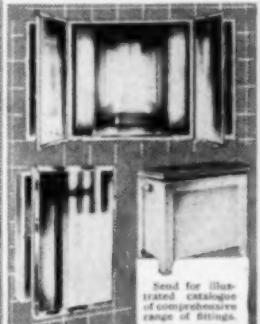
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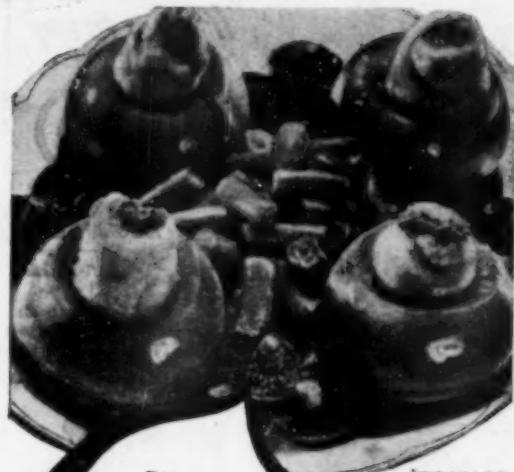
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State and Private Charity

ACCORDING to the Drage Return the amount taken for Social Services from the tax payer and the rate payer, which was about £30,000,000 at the turn of the century, had risen in 1939 to £40,000,000. The amount that is raised today for public assistance must be about double the 1939 figure, and yet judging by the appeals one receives the need for private charity must be greater than ever. This is so strange as to warrant a Royal Commission to enquire into the whole thing. Meanwhile we suggest that we merchants and manufacturers be set free to make all the money we can even if the Chancellor of the Exchequer takes the half of it away from us. Let him restore honest money, free the foreign exchanges, give up government bulk buying, and restore merchandising to the merchants. In short, return to free trade. Let us make money even if we are not allowed to keep it. This is pretty well the Socialism of the late Philip Snowden. We all know there is considerable abuse of the Social Services, and we all know freedom can be abused. Given the fear of God almost any system will work, and without this fear of God no system will work. We should not unduly worry if Sir Hartley Shawcross and his friends "are the masters now" if they remember that they have a Master in Heaven.

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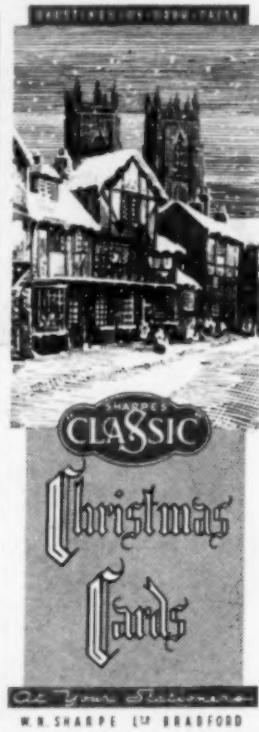
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' You are going to tell me ' said the Vicar briskly, ' that your machine will fly at six hundred miles an hour. You are going to talk of speed and progress, hinting perhaps that I do not move with the times.'

' For my part ' the Vicar went on, ' I am going to sing the praises of things that go slow and do not change. Yes, I refer to Three Nuns. Admirable, unhurried tobacco! Cool, leisurely leaf! Each coiled disc dedicated to long-drawn, fragrant minutes. In all, a tobacco that has weathered the years wisely. As excellent today as when I first started smoking it in gayer days. Will you have a pipeful? I am sure your aeroplane will wait.'

Three Nuns

ORIGINAL BLEND EMPIRE BLEND

NITROGEN



IN 1898, Sir William Crookes warned the world that the human race might soon starve because intensive cultivation was draining the soil of essential plant foods. Yet today, agricultural land has become more productive than ever, for the chemist has learned the necessity for returning to the soil the nitrogen and other elements taken up by the plant in its growth. Nitrogen is a colourless, inert gas that forms four-fifths of the air we breathe. Hundreds of thousands of tons of it are available over every square mile of the earth's surface, but it must first be "trapped" and then combined with other elements before plants can absorb it in the form of fertilizers.

Every day, the great synthetic ammonia factories of I.C.I. convert hundreds of tons of nitrogen from the air into a range of fertilizers that have helped to make British farming the most efficient in the world. And not fertilizers only: I.C.I. also uses nitrogen to make explosives and plastics, resins, paints and leathercloth. I.C.I.'s nylon and other synthetic textile fibres contain nitrogen. So, too, do many of the drugs which I.C.I. contributes to modern medicine.



**DO CHILDREN
TALK T.I.?**

A small boy on a tricycle. Nothing special about that — unless he thinks he's a dirt-track rider, when you have to look out. But a couple of generations ago there was no T.I., and most small boys had nothing more exciting to ride than a tea-tray. No trikes, no children's bikes, no rocking boats, or chutes, or slides, or climbing frames, or half the things clever people manufacture from (as it happens) T.I. materials. Not much help from Mother, either, with no T.I. to help her run the house. Yet even to-day . . . funny thing . . . you hardly ever hear a child mention T.I.

THE SURNAME OF A THOUSAND THINGS

The letters T.I. stand for Tube Investments Ltd., of The Adelphi, London, W.C.2. (Trafalgar 5633). They also stand for the thirty producing companies of the T.I. Group, whose specialist skills are co-ordinated to the general field of light engineering.

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. . . on all occasions
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Questions asked about Life Assurance : 4

How does a Pension Scheme for employees work?

More and more companies, large and small, are turning to Pension and Life Assurance Schemes to provide for their employees. Why? Because it is the safe, economical way to take care of the future. Even when on a modest scale, the benefits are an important addition to State pensions, allowing for the little comforts over and above the bare necessities of life. And a Pension and Life Assurance Scheme does something that the State scheme does not do—it provides a substantial lump sum for the employee's dependants in the event of his early death. All this at no undue cost either to employers or employed, since a Scheme can be 'made-to-measure' for any group. Here are some actual examples of the benefits:—

Twenty-four Years' Service led to good rewards for Mr. R. B. who had been with his firm for 18 years when a Pension Scheme was started in 1930. In 1946, at 65, he retired on a yearly pension of £160. He is still receiving this pension. His own contributions amounted to only £187. 4s., but to date he has been paid over £2000.



For His Wife's Sake, Mr. A. L. decided, shortly before his retirement, to exchange the pension due to him for a reduced pension payable to himself or his wife as long as either should live. Four years after retiring Mr. A. L. died—but his wife still enjoys this pension and it will continue throughout her lifetime.



Mr. S. M. died suddenly, less than 12 months after joining the Scheme arranged by his employers. His widow at once received the Life Assurance benefit of £25; and because of special provisions of the Scheme, she became entitled to £50 a year for all the 36 years until her husband would have reached normal retiring age.

Pension Schemes can include any number of employees from two or three to 10,000 or more. The money is held in trust. Benefits vary with payments; usually the members themselves make a contribution and the employer pays the balance. A Pension Scheme means protection and peace of mind for every man and woman concerned and happier working all round.

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